THE Sincere Convert:

Discovering the small number of TRUE BELIEVERS, And the great difficulty of *Saving Conversion.*

Wherein are excellently and plainly opened these choice and Divine Principles:

Viz.
1. That there is a God, and this God is most glorious.
2. That God made Man in a blessed estate.
3. Man's misery by his Fall.
4. Christ the onely Redeemer by price.
5. That few are saved, and that with difficulty.
6. That Man's perdition is of himself.

Whereto is now added
The SAINT's JEWEL, shewing how to apply the Promises; and
The SOUL's INVITATION unto *Jesus Christ.*

By THO. SHEPPARD, *sometimes of* Emanuel *Colledge in* Cambridge.

Streight is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Matth. 7. 14.

LONDON,
Printed by *E. Flesher* for *Robert Horn*, at the *South Entrance* of the *Royal Exchange.* 1672.

the Loss of frinds is great
the Loss of faith his more
But the Loss of Christ
his Shuch a Loss!
that nare Can Be Restord

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To the Christian READER.

IN these evil and perillous times, God hath not left us without some choice mercies. Our sins abound, and his mercies superabound. The Lord might justly have spoken those words of death against us, which of old he did against the Jews, I have taken away my peace from this people, loving-kindness and mercies: *which had he pulled from us, we had cause enough to mourn with* Rachel; *and to refuse comfort; for all our happiness lies wrapt up in* peace, loving-kindness *and* mercy. *But God is yet good unto* Israel, (*Psal.* 73. 1.) *he commands deliverances for* Jacob, (*Psal.* 44. 4.) *he over-rules all the powers of darkness,* (Psal. 76. 10.) *and tells the sons of* Belial, (*men of corrupt minds, and cursed practice,*) *that* they shall proceed no farther, *but* that their folly shall be manifest unto all, (2 *Tim.* 3. 8, 9.) *He makes all enemies, all Devils, all creatures, to further his own glory, and the good of his peculiar people. When times are naught and dangerous, he saith,* Come, my people, enter into thy chambers; and shut thy doors about thee, hide thy self as it were for a little moment, till the indignation be over-past (*Isa.* 26. 10.) *If troubles threaten life, he saith,* When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the Rivers, they shall not over-flow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee: for I am the Lord thy God, *&c. Isa.* 43. 3. *When enemies are incensed, fears and sorrows multiplied, he saith,* Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be

not dismaied, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, I will help thee, yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousnes. Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded, they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish, *Isai.* 41. 10, 11. *Such words of comfort and life doth God speak unto his. And among other mercies, he stirs up the spirits of his servants to write many precious truths and tracts to further the everlasting good of his beloved ones. If the* bottomles pit be open, *and* smoak rise thence, *to darken the aire, and obscure the way of the Saints,* Rev. 5. 2. Heaven also is opened, *Rev.* 11. 19. *and there are lightnings and voices, to inlighten their spirits, and direct their paths. Had ever any Age such lightnings as we have? Did ever any speak, since Christ and his Apostles, as men now speak? We may truly and safely say of our Divines and writers,* The voice of God, and not of man: *Such abundance of the Spirit hath God poured into some men, that it is not they, but the spirit of the Father that speaks in them.*

What infinite cause hath this Age to acknowledge the unspeakable mercy of God in affording us such plenty of spiritual Tractates, full of Divine, *necessary, and conscience-searching truths, yea precious, soul-comforting, and soul-improving truths? such whereby* Head, Heart, *and* Soul-cheating errours *are discovered, and prevented; such as soundly difference true grace from all seemings and paintings. No time, no Nation exceeds us herein: and shall we that abound in truths be penurious in praises? Consider, Reader, whether spiritual truths be not worthy of thy choicest praises. Every Divine truth is one of Gods eternal thoughts, it's heaven-born, and bears the Image of God. Truth is the glory of the sacred Trinity. Hence the* Spirit *is called* Truth, *Jer.* 5. 6. Christ *is called* Truth, *John* 14. 6. *and* God *himself.*

ſelf is ſaid to be the God of truth, *Deut.*32.4. *It is ſo delightful to him, that* his eyes are alwayes upon the Truth, *Jer.*5.1. *and when the only wiſe God would have men make a purchaſe, he counſels them to* buy the Truth. *And is it not good counſel? Is it not a good purchaſe? Can you beſtow your pains, or lay out your money better? If you be dead in ſins and treſpaſſes,* Truth *is the ſeed of a new life, of a heavenly birth,* Jam.1.18. *If you be in any bondage,* Truth *can make* you free, *John* 8.32. *If compaſſed about with enemies,* Truth *can ſhield thee,* Pſ. 91.4. *If you be full of filthy thoughts and luſts, or any impurities, the* Truth *can ſanctifie you,* John 17.17. *If darkneſs and faintneſs poſſeſs your ſouls,* Truth *is* lumen & pabulum animæ, *the light and life of the ſoul,* Pſal.119.105.

Let us then advance our thoughts of Truth, *and rate it above all ſublunary things, and buy it though it coſt us all: it is no* Simony, *it is not too dear, you cannot over-value* Truth. *It is ſiſter to the* Peace of God, *which paſſeth all underſtanding. See how God himſelf eſtimates his word and truth,* Pſalm.138.2. Thou haſt magnify'd thy Word above all thy Name. *Whatſoever God is known by beſides his* Word, *is beneath his* Word. *Take the whole Creation, which is* God's name *in the greateſt letters, it's nothing to his Word and Truth. Therefore Chriſt tells the Phariſees, it is eaſier for Heaven and Earth to paſs, then one tittle of the Law to fail. If the leaſt* Jod *or* Tittle *of the* Law *be prized by God above all the World, let us take heed of undervaluing the great and glorious Truths of the* Goſpel, *and ſettle it as a Law upon our hearts, that we can never over-prize or yield ſufficient praiſe for any truth.*

Men can praiſe God for the bleſſings of the field, the Seas, the Womb, and of their Shops; but where is the man that praiſes God for his bleſſing of bleſſings, for Truth, *for good* books, *for heavenly* treatiſes? *Men ſeldome purpoſely*

lift up their hearts and voices to Heaven to praise God for the riches of knowledge bestowed upon them. In good books you have mens labour, and Gods truth: the tribute of thanks is due for both; that God enables men to so great labours, and that he conveys such precious treasure through earthen vessels. David *thought it his duty to praise God for* Truth, *Psal.* 143.2. *and hath left it upon record for our imitation. He saw such excellency, and found so much sweet gain in* Truth, *that he must break out into praises for it.*

Reader, *give over thy old way of slighting and censuring mens labours. Experience hath long since told thee, that no good comes that way. Now learn to turn thy prejudice unto praises, and prove what will be the fruit of honouring and praising God for truths dispensed by his faithful servants. Let me tell thee, this is a chief way to keep* Truth *still amongst us. If* Truths *be not received* with the love of them, *and God honoured for them, presently* strong delusions *come, and* Truth *must suffer or flie. God hath made good that promise in* Jeremy, *he hath revealed unto us* abundance of peace and truth, *and we through ingratitude have forfeited both. Our peace is shaken, and who can promise himself with* Hezekiah, *there shall be peace and truth in my days? Peace may fail thee, but let not* Truth. *Every good Christian may, and should say, with the good King, there shall be* Truth *in my days, if not* Peace *and* Truth. *I will so far honour* Truth, *as to receive the* love of it. *I will hold it fast by faith, hold it forth by practice, praise God daily for it, and venture all in defence of it. So did the Martyrs, whose memory is sweet, and whose regard is great. It is better suffering for truth, then with truth; yet if* Truth *must suffer, or can die, better it is to die with* Truth *then out-live it.*

But that Truth *may live, and we live by* Truth, *let us magnifie God much for* Truth, *for his Word, and good books*

that

that spring thence. Some probably may say, it's enough to praise God for his Word, other books are not tanti. *Wilt thou praise God for the Sea, and be unthankful for the Rivers and Springs? Wilt thou lift up thy voice for the great waters, and be silent for the silver drops and showrs? If the former rain affect thee, be not ungrateful for the latter. God would have men to value his servants, and praise him for their labours.*

But they have errours in them.

Be it so; shall we refuse to praise God for the Flowers and the Corn, because there be some Weeds in the Garden, and Thistles in the Field? Prejudice not thy self, buy, read, take thy delight: Here is a Garden without Weeds, a Corn field without Cockle or Darnel, Thorn or Thistle. Art thou a Sincere Convert? *Here are truths suitable, solid, and wholsome; thou mayst feed and feast without fear.*

The Author is one of singular piety, inward acquaintance with God, skill'd in the deceits of mens hearts, able to enlighten the dark corners of the little World, and to give satisfaction to staggering spirits. His work needs not the purple of anothers commendation to adorn it. But because custome, not necessity, (for it is Truths *prerogative to travel without a pasport) I say, because custome causeth* Truth *to crave and carry Epistles Commendatory; know that the work is weighty, quick, and spiritual: and if thine eye be single in perusing it, thou shalt find many precious, soul-searching, soul-quickening, and soul-enriching truths in it; yea, be so warned and awakened, as that thou canst not but bless God for the man and matter, unless thou be possess'd with a dumb Devil.*

To conclude; Christian Reader, take heed of unthankfulness: spiritual mercies should have the quickest and fullest praises. Such is this work, thou foresawest it not, thou contributedst nothing to the birth of it: It's a preventing

mercy. By it and other of the ſame nature, God hath made knowledge to abound, the waters of the Sanctuary are daily encreaſed, and grown deep. Let not the waters of the Sanctuary *put out the fire of the* Sanctuary. *If there be no praiſe, there is no fire. If thy* head *be like a Winter's Sun, full of Light, and* heart *like a Winter's earth, without fruit; fear leſt thy* light *end in utter* darkneſs, *and the* Tree of knowledge *deprive thee of the* Tree of life. *The Lord grant thou mayeſt find ſuch benefit by this work, as that thy heart may be raviſhed with* Truth, *and raiſed to praiſe God to purpoſe, and made to pray,* Lord, ſtill ſend forth thy light and truth, that they may lead us. *So prays*

Thine in Chriſt,

W. Greenhill.

The

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Another Book published by Mr. *Thomas Sheppard*, called *The Sound Believer.*

AN INTRODUCTION To the Work.

THE knowledge of Divinity is neceſſary for all ſorts of men, both to ſettle and eſtabliſh the good, and to convert and fetch in the bad. Gods Principles pull down Satans falſe Principles ſet up in mans head, loved and believed with mens hearts, and defended by their tongues. Whileſt theſe ſtrong holds remain unſhaken, the Lord Jeſus is kept off from conquering of the ſoul.

Now ſpiritual truths are either ſuch as tend to enlarge the underſtanding, or ſuch as may work chiefly upon the affections. I paſs by (in this knowing age) the firſt of theſe, and (being among a people whoſe hearts are hard enough) I begin with the latter ſort: For the *underſtanding*, although it may literally, yet it never ſavingly entertains any truth, until the *affections* be therewith ſmitten and wrought upon.

I ſhall therefore here proſecute the unfolding of theſe divine Principles.

The Principal Heads inſiſted upon.

Firſt, that there is one moſt glorious God.

Secondly that this God made all Mankind at firſt in *Adam* in a moſt glorious eſtate.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, that all Mankind is *now* fallen from that eſtate into a bottomleſs gulph of ſin and miſery.

Fourthly, that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the only means of Redemption of this eſtate.

Fifthly, that thoſe that are ſaved out of this woful eſtate by Chriſt are very few, and that theſe few are ſaved with much difficulty.

Sixthly, that the greateſt cauſe why ſo many die and periſh in this eſtate is from *themſelves*: either,

1. By reaſon of their *bloudy ignorance*, they know not their miſery. Or,
2. By reaſon of their *carnal ſecurity*, they feel not, they groan not under their ſin and miſery.
3. By reaſon of their *carnal confidence*, they ſeek to help themſelves out of their miſery by their own duties, when they ſee or feel it. Or,
4. By reaſon of their *Falſe faith*, whereby they catch hold upon, and truſt unto, the merits of Chriſt too ſoon, when they ſee and feel they cannot help themſelves.

THE

THE SINCERE CONVERT:

Discovering the small number OF TRUE BELIEVERS.

CHAP. I.

That there is a God, and this God is most glorious.

Exod. 33. 18.

I beseech thee shew me thy Glory.

THIS is the first divine Truth, and there are these two parts considerable in it. The first Principle.

1. That there is a *God.*
2. That this God is *most glorious.*

I will begin with the first part, and prove (omitting many Philosophical Arguments) *That there is a God, a true God:* For every Nation almost in the World, until Christ's coming, had a several God. Some worshipped the *Sun*, some the *Moon*, called by *Ezekiel The Queen of Heaven*, which some made Cakes unto; some *the whole Heavens:* some worshipped the *Fire*,

There is a God.

Plin. lib. 1. *Nat. Hiſt.*

ſome the *bruit Beaſts*; ſome *Baal*, and ſome *Molech*. The *Romans* (ſaith *Varro*) had 6000 gods: who impriſoning the light of nature *were given up to ſins againſt nature*, either to worſhip *Idols* of mans invention, as the ignorant; or *GOD and Angels* in thoſe Idols, as the learned did. But theſe are all falſe gods.

Rom. 1.

God the Being of Beings.

I am now to prove that *there is one true God*, the Being of Beings, or the firſt Being. Although the proving of this Point ſeems needleſs, becauſe every man runs with the cry, and ſaith *there is a God*; yet few throughly believe this Point. Many of the children of God, who are beſt able to know mens hearts, becauſe they *onely* ſtudy their hearts, feel this temptation, *Is there a God?* bitterly aſſaulting them ſometimes. The Devil will ſometimes undermine, and ſeek to blow up the ſtrongeſt walls and bulwarks. The Light of Nature indeed ſhews that there *is* a God; but how many are there that, by foul ſins againſt their conſcience, blow out and extinguiſh almoſt all the Light of Nature? And hence though they dare not conclude, becauſe they have ſome light, though dim; yet if they ſaw their heart, they might ſee it ſecretly ſuſpect and queſtion, *whether there be a God.* But grant that none queſtions this truth, yet we that are builders muſt not fall to a work without our main props and pillars. It may appear therefore that there is a God, from theſe grounds.

Sin blows out the Light of Nature.

The firſt ground to prove a God.

First, *From the works of God*, *Rom.* 1. 20. When we ſee a ſtately Houſe, although we ſee not the man that built it, although alſo we know

know not the time when it was built, yet will we conclude thus, Surely ſome wiſe Artificer hath been working here: can we, when we behold the ſtately Theatre of Heaven and Earth, conclude other, but that the finger, arms, and wiſdom of God hath been here, although we ſee not him that is inviſible, and although we know not the time when he began to build? Every creature in Heaven and Earth is a loud Preacher of this truth. Who ſet thoſe Candles, thoſe Torches of Heaven on the Table? Who hung out thoſe Lanterns in Heaven to enlighten a dark World? Who can make the ſtatue of a man, but one wiſer than the ſtone out of which it is hewn? Could any frame a man, but one wiſer and greater than man? Who taught the Birds to build their neſts, and the Bees to ſet up and order their Common-wealth? Who ſends the Sun poſt from one end of Heaven to the other, carrying ſo many thouſand bleſſings to ſo many thouſands of people and Kingdoms? What power of men or Angels can make the leaſt pile of graſs, or put life into the leaſt flie, if once dead? There is therefore a power above all created power, which is *God*. There is a God.

Secondly, *From the Word of God*. There is ſuch a Majeſty ſtirring, and ſuch ſecrets revealed in the Word, that if men will not be wilfully blind, they cannot but cry out, *The voyce of God, and not the voyce of man*. Hence *Calvin* undertakes to prove the Scripture to be the Word of God, by reaſon, againſt all Atheiſts under Heaven. Haſt thou not The ſecond ground to prove a God.

There is a God.

not thought ſometimes at a Sermon, the Miniſter hath ſpoken to none but thee, and that ſome or other hath told the Miniſter what thou haſt ſaid, what thou haſt done, what thou haſt thought? now that Word which tells thee the thoughts of thy heart can be nothing elſe but the Word of an all-ſeeing God, that ſearcheth the heart.

It is the word of God that quickens the dead.

Again, that word which quickeneth the dead is certainly God's Word: but the word of *God* ordinarily preached *quickeneth the dead*; it maketh the blind to ſee, the dumb to ſpeak, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, thoſe that never felt their ſins to load them, to mourn, thoſe that never could pray, to breath out unutterable groans and ſighs for their ſins.

The third ground to prove a God.

Thirdly, *From the children begotten of God:* For we may read in mens foreheads, as ſoon as ever they are born, the ſentence of death; and we may ſee by mens lives what helliſh hearts they have. Now there is a time that ſome of this monſtrous brood of men are quite changed, and made all new; they have new minds, new opinions, new deſires, new joyes, new ſorrows, new ſpeeches, new prayers, new lives; and ſuch a difference there is betwixt theſe and others, that they are hated by others who loved them well while they loved their ſins: and whence came this ſtrange change? Is it from themſelves? No; for they hated this new life and theſe new men once themſelves. Is it becauſe they would be credited thereby? No; it is to be

Job 3. 3.

hated

hated of father, mother, friends, and maligned every-where. Is it out of simplicity, or are their brains grown crazy? They were indeed once fools, and I can prove them all to be *Solomon's* fools: but even simple men have been known to be more wise for the world, after they have been made new. But lastly, is it now from a slavish fear of Hell, which works this alteration? Nothing less; they abhor to live like slaves in *Bridewell*, to do all for fear of the whip. There is a God.

Fourthly, *From God's Register, or Notary, which is in every man; I mean, the Conscience of man*; which telleth them there is a God: and although they silence it sometimes, yet in time of thunder, or some great plague, as *Pharaoh*, or at the day of death, when they are near God's Tribunal, then they acknowledge him clearly. The fearful terrors of conscience prove this, which like a Bailiff arrests men for their debts; *Ergo*, there is some Creditor to set it on: sometimes like a hangman it torments men; *Ergo*, there is some strange Judge that gave it that Command. Whence arise these dreadful terrors in men? Of *themselves?* No surely: all desire to be in peace, and so to live and sleep in a whole skin. Comes it from *Melancholy?* No; for *Melancholy* comes on by degrees: these terrors of Conscience surprise the Soul suddenly at a Sermon, suddenly after the commission of some secret foul sin. Again, Melancholy sadness may be cured by Physick; but many Physicians have given such men over to other The fourth ground to prove a God.

There is a God.

Physicians. Melancholly sadness may be born; *but a wounded spirit who can bear?* Thus you see that *there is a God.*

Object. Object. *Who ever saw God, that every one is thus bold to affirm that there is a God?* —

Answ. *Answ.* Indeed his face never was seen by mortal man; but his back parts have been seen, are seen, and may be seen by all the world, as hath been proved.

Object. Object. *All things are brought to pass by second causes.*

Answ. 1. *Answ.* 1. What though? Is there no Master in the house, because the Servants do all the work? This great God maintains state by doing all the creatures subjection; yet sometimes we may cry out in beholding some special pieces of his administration: Here is the Finger of God.

Answ. 2. 2. What though there be such confusion in the world, as that shillings stand for pence, and counters stand for pounds, the best men are bought and sold at a low rate, and worst men prized and preferred? yet if we had eyes to see and conceive, we should see an harmony in this discord of things. God is now, like a wise Carpenter, but hewing out his work. There is a lumber and confusion seemingly among us: let us stay till the day of Judgement, and then we shall see infinite wisdome in fitting all this for his own glory, and for the good of his people.

Object. Object. *But if there be a God, why hears he not his peoples Prayers? Why doth he forget them when they have most need of him?*

I

There is a God.

I answer, *Noah's Dove* returns not presently with an Olive-branch of peace in his mouth. Prayer sometime that speeds well returns not presently, for want of company enough to fetch away that abundance of mercy which God hath to give. The Lord ever gives them their asking in money or money-worth, in the same thing or a better. The Lord ever gives his importunate beggers their desires, either in pence by little and little, or by pounds: long he is many times before he gives, but payeth them well for their waiting.

Answ.

Use 1.

This is a Use of *Reproof to all Atheists*, either in *opinion* or *practice*.

A discovery of Atheism.

First, in *opinion*; such as either conclude, or suspect there is no God. Oh blasphemous thoughts! Are there any such men? Men? nay Beasts, nay Devils, nay worse than Devils, for they *believe and tremble*. Yet *the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God*, Psal. 14. 1. Men that have little heads, little knowledge without hearts, as Scholars sometimes of weak brains, being guided only by their Books, seeing how things come by second causes, yet cannot raise their dull thoughts to the beholding of a first cause. Great Politicians are like children, always standing on their heads, and shaking their heels against Heaven: these think Religion to be but a piece of policy, to keep people in awe. Prophane persons desiring to go on in sin without any rub or check for sin, blow out all the Light of Nature, wishing there were no God to punish, and therefore are willing to suspect and seru-

There is a God.

ple that not to be which indeed is. Thoſe alſo that have ſinned ſecretly, though not openly, againſt nature, or the light of conſcience: God ſmites them for Inceſt, Sodomy, Self-pollution, with diſmal blindneſs. Thoſe alſo that are notorious worldlings, that look no higher than their barns, no farther than their ſhops: the world is a pearl in their eye; they cannot ſee a God.

If no God, no Heaven, nor Hell.

Laſtly, I ſuſpect thoſe men that never found out this thief, this ſin, that was bred and born with them, nor ſaw it in their own hearts, but there it lies ſtill in ſome dark corner of their ſouls, to cut their throats: theſe kind of men ſometimes ſuſpect there is no God. O! this is a grievous ſin; for if no God, no Heaven, no Hell, no Martyrs, no Prophets, no Scriptures. Chriſt was then a horrible lier, and an Impoſtor. Other ſins wrong and grieve God, and wound him; but this ſin ſtabs the very heart of God, it ſtrikes at the life, and is (as much as lies in ſinful man) the death of God: for it ſaith, *There is no God*,

A ſecond reproof to Atheiſts.

Secondly, this reproveth Atheiſts *in practice*, which ſay there is a God, and queſtion it not, but in works they deny him. He that plucks the King from his Throne is as vile as he that ſaith he is no King. Theſe men are almoſt as bad as Atheiſts in opinion. And of ſuch duſt-heaps we may find in every corner, that in their practice deny God; men that ſet up other gods in God's room, their *wealth*, their *honour*, their *pleaſure*, their *backs* and *bellies*, to be their gods; men that make bold to do

that

that againſt this true God which Idolaters dare not do againſt their Idol-gods, and that is, continually to wrong this God; men that ſeek not for all they want by prayer, nor return all back again to God by praiſe. There is a God.

A ſecond Uſe is, *for Exhortation.* Oh labour to ſee and behold this God. Is there a God, and wilt thou not give him a good look? Oh paſs by all the rivers, till thou come to the ſpring-head; wade through all creatures, until thou art drowned, plunged, and ſwallowed up with God. When thou ſeeſt the Heavens, ſay, *Where is that great Builder that made this?* When thou heareſt of mutations of Kingdoms, ſay, *Where is the Lord of Hoſts, the great Captain of theſe Armies?* When thou taſteſt ſweetneſs in the Creature, or in God's Ordinances, ſay, *Where is ſweetneſs it ſelf, beauty it ſelf? Where is the Sea of theſe drops, the Sun of theſe beams?* Oh that men ſaw this God! It's Heaven to behold him: thou art then in a corner of Hell, that canſt not, doſt not ſee him; and yet what is leſs known than God? Methinks, when men hear there is a God about them, they ſhould lie groveling in the duſt, becauſe of his glory: If men did ſee him, they would ſpeak of him. Who ſpeaks of God? Nay, men cannot ſpeak to God; but as beggers have learned to cant, ſo many a man to pray. Oh, men ſee not God in prayer, therefore they cannot ſpeak to God by prayer. Men ſin, and God frowns, (which makes the Devils to quake) yet mens hearts ſhake *Uſe* 2.

There is a God.

shake not, because they see him not.

Use 3. Oh make choice of this God as thy God. What though there be a God, if he be not thy God, what art thou the better? Down with all thy Idol-gods, and set up this God. If there be any creature that ever did thee any good, that God set not a-work for thy good, love that, think on that as thy *God*. If there be any thing that can give thee any succour on thy death-bed, or when thou art departed from this world, take that to be thy *God*. Thou mightest have been born in *India*, and never have heard of the true God, but worshipped the Devil for thy God: Oh therefore make choice of him alone to be thy God; give away thy self wholly and for ever to him, and he will give away his whole self everlastingly unto thee. Seek him weeping, and thou shalt find him. Bind thy self by the strongest oaths and bonds in Covenant to be his, and he will enter into Covenant with thee, and so be thine, *Jer.*50.3,4,5.

Use 3. Make choice of God for thy God.

Use 4. The fourth Use is, an Use of comfort to them that forsake all for this God: thou hast not lost all for nought, thou hast not cast away substance for shadows, but shadows for somewhat, *Prov.*8.18. When all comfort is gone, there is a *God* to comfort thee. When thou hast no rest here, there is a God to rest in: when thou art dead, he can quicken thee; when thou art weak, he is strong; and when friends are gone, he will be a sure one to thee.

Thus much of the first part of this Doctrine,

ſtrine, or divine Truth, *That there is a God*: There is a God.
Now it followeth to ſhew you that this God is *a moſt glorious God*, and that in four things he is glorious.

1. In his *Eſſence*.
2. In his *Attributes*.
3. In his *Perſons*.
4. In his *Works*.

1. He is Glorious in his *Eſſence*. Now what this Glory is, no man or Angel hath, doth, or ever ſhall know. Their cockle-ſhell can never comprehend this Sea; he muſt have the wiſdom of God, and ſo be a God, that comprehendeth the Eſſence of God: but though it cannot be comprehended what it is, yet it may be apprehended that it is incomprehenſible and glorious; which makes his glory to be the more admired; as we admire the luſtre of the Sun the more, in that it is ſo great we cannot behold it. 1. Gods Eſſence.

2. *God is glorious in his Attributes*, which are thoſe divine perfections whereby he makes himſelf known unto us. Which Attributes are not qualities in God, but natures. God's *Wiſdom* is God himſelf, and God's *Power* is God himſelf, *&c.* Neither are they divers things in God, but they are divers only in regard of our underſtanding, and in regard of their different effects on different objects. God puniſhing the wicked, is the Juſtice of God; God compaſſionating the miſerable, is the mercy of God. 2. Gods Attributes.

Now the Attributes of God, omitting curious diviſions, are theſe.

1. He

There is a glorious God.

An explanation of God's attributes.

1. A ſpiritual God.

1. He is *a Spirit*, or a Spiritual God, *John* 4. 24. therefore abhors all worſhip and all duties performed without the influence of the Spirit; as, to confeſs thy ſins without ſhame or ſorrow, and to ſay the Lord's Prayer without underſtanding, to hear the Word that thou mayſt onely know more, and not that thou mayſt be affected more. Oh, theſe carcaſſes of holy duties are moſt odious ſacrifices before God.

2. A living God.

2. He is *a living God*, whereby he liveth of himſelf, and gives live to all other things. Away then with thy dead heart to this Principle of life to quicken thee, that his Almighty power may pluck thee out of thy Sepulchre, unlooſe thy grave-cloathes, that ſo thou mayeſt live.

3. An infinite God.

3. He is an *infinite God*, whereby he is without limits of being, 2 *Chr.* 6. 18. Horrible then is the leaſt ſin that ſtrikes an infinite great God, and lamentable is the eſtate of all thoſe with whom this God is angry: thou haſt infinite goodneſs to forſake thee, and infinite power and wrath to ſet againſt thee.

4. An eternal God.

4. He is an *Eternal God*, without beginning or end of being, *Pſal.* 80. 1. Great therefore is the folly of thoſe men that prefer a little ſhort pleaſure before this eternal God; that like *Eſau* ſell away an everlaſting inheritance for a little pottage, for a baſe luſt and the pleaſure of it.

5. An All-ſufficient God.

5. He is an *All-ſufficient God*, *Gen.* 17. 1. What lack you therefore, you that would fain have this God, and the love of this God, but you

you are loth to take the pains to find him: , or to be at coſt to purchaſe him with the loſs of all? Here's infinite, eternal, preſent ſweetneſs, goodneſs, grace, glory and mercy, to be found in this God. Why poſt you from mountain to hill? why ſpend you your money, your *thoughts, time, endeavours,* on things that ſatisfie not? Here is thy reſting-place. Thy cloaths may warm thee, but they cannot feed thee; thy meat may feed thee, but cannot heal thee; thy Phyſick may heal thee, but cannot maintain thee; thy money may maintain thee, but cannot comfort thee, when diſtreſſes of conſcience and anguiſh of heart come upon thee. This God is joy in ſadneſs, light in darkneſs, life in death, Heaven in Hell. Here is all thine eye ever ſaw, thine heart ever deſired, thy tongue ever asked, thy mind ever conceived. Here is all light in this Sun, and all water in this Sea, out of whom, as out of a Cryſtal Fountain thou ſhalt drink down all the refined ſweetneſs of all creatures in Heaven and Earth for ever and ever. All the world is now ſeeking and tiring out themſelves for reſt: here only it can be found.

There is a glorious God.

God is joy in ſadneſs.

6. He is an *Omnipotent God*, whereby he can do what-ever he will: yield therefore, and ſtand not out in the ſinful or ſubtil cloſe maintenance of any one ſin againſt this God ſo powerful, who can cruſh thee at his pleaſure.

6. An omnipotent God.

7. He is an *All-ſeeing God*: He knows what poſſibly can be or may be known: approve thy ſelf therefore to this God only in all

7. An All-ſeeing God.

There is a God.

all thy wayes. It's no matter what men ſay, cenſure or think of thee. It's no matter what thy fellow-actours on this Stage of the world imagine. God is the great Spectatour that beholds thee in every place: God is thy Spie, and takes compleat notice of all the actions of thy life; and they are in print in Heaven, which that great Spectatour and Judge will open at the great day, and read aloud in the ears of all the World. Fear to ſin therefore in ſecret, unleſs thou canſt find out ſome dark hole where the eye of God cannot diſcern thee. Mourn for thy ſecret neglect of holy duties, mourn for thy ſecret hypocriſie, whoredom, prophaneneſs; and with ſhame in thy face come before this God for pardon and mercy. Admire and wonder at his patience, that, having ſeen thee, hath not damned thee.

8. A true God.

8. He is *a true God*; whereby he means to do as he ſaith. Let every child of God therefore know to his comfort, that whatſoever he hath under a *promiſe*, ſhall one day be all made good: and let all wicked men know, what-ever threatning God hath denounced, whatſoever arrows are in the bow-ſtring, will one day flie and hit, and ſtrike deep; and the longer the Lord is a-drawing, the deeper wound will God's arrow (that is, God's *threatning*) make.

9. An holy God.

9. He is *an holy God*: Be not aſhamed therefore of holineſs, which if it aſcend above the common ſtrain of honeſty, the blind and mad world accounts it madneſs. *If the righteous,*

ous, that is, those that be most holy, *be scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?* 1 Pet. 4. 18. Where? not before Saints nor Angels, for holiness is their trade; not before the face of the Man Christ Jesus, for holiness was his *meat and drink*; not before the face of a blessed God, for holiness is his nature; not in Heaven, for no unclean thing crawls there: they shall never see God, Christ, Saints, Angels, or Heaven, to their comfort, that are not holy. Wear therefore that as thy Crown now, which will be thy glory in Heaven; and if this be *to be vile*, be more vile. There is a God.

10. He is *a just and merciful God*: just in himself, and so will punish all sin; merciful in the face of Christ, and so will punish no sin, having already born our punishments for them. A just God against a hard-hearted sinner, a merciful God towards an humble sinner. God is not all Mercy, and no Justice; nor all Justice, and no Mercy. Submit to him, his mercy embraceth thee: Resist him, his justice pursues thee. When a child of God is humbled indeed, commonly he makes God a hard-hearted, cruel God, loth to help; and saith, Can such a sinner be pardoned? A wicked man that was never humbled, makes God a God of clouts, one that (howsoever he speaks heavy words, yet he is a merciful God, and) will not do as he saith; and he finds it no difficult work to believe the greatest sin may be pardoned. Conceive therefore of him as you have heard. 10. A just and merciful God.

Thirdly,

There is a glorious God.

3. God is glorious in his Persons.

Thirdly, *God* is glorious in his *Persons*, which are three; *Father* begetting, *Son* begotten, and the *Holy Ghost*, the third Person, proceeding. Here the *Father* is called *the Father of glory*, *Ephes.* 1. Christ is called *the Lord of glory*, 1 *Cor.* 2. and the Spirit is called *the Spirit of glory*, 1 *Pet.* 4. The Father is glorious in his great work of *Election*; the Son is glorious in his great work of *Redemption*; the Holy Ghost is glorious in his work of *Application*: The Father is glorious in chusing the House; the Son is glorious in buying the House; the Spirit is glorious in dwelling in the House; that is, the Heart of a poor lost sinner.

4. God is glorious in his works.

4. He is glorious in his *Works*; in his works of *Creation*, and in his works of *Providence* and *Government*: wonder therefore that he should so vouchsafe to look upon such worms, such dunghils, such Lepers as we are; to provide, protect, to slay his Son, to call, to strive, to wait, to give away himself and all that he is worth unto us. Oh fear this God when you come before him. People come before God in prayer as before their fellows, or as before an Idol: People tremble not at his voice in the Word. A King or Monarch will be served in State: yet how rudely, how slovenly do men go about every holy duty? Thus much of the first principle Head, *That there is one most glorious God.* Now we are to proceed to the second.

The end of the first Principle.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That this God made all mankind at first in a most glorious and happy estate, like unto himself.

The second Principle.

FOR the opening of which Assertion I have chosen this Text, *Eccl.* 7. 29. *God made man righteous*; which clearly demonstrates,

Doct. That God made all mankind at first in *Adam*, in a most glorious, happy, and righteous estate: Man, when he came first out of God's Mint, shined most glorious. There is a marvellous glory in all creatures, (the servants and houshold-stuff of man;) therefore there was a greater glory in Man himself, the end of them. God calleth a Parliament, and gathers a Council when Man was to be made; and said, *Come let us make Man in our own Image*; as though all the wisdome of the Trinity should be seen in the Creation of Man.

The creatures Man's servants.

Object. *Wherein did the glory and blessednes of Man appear?*

Answ. In the impression of God's Image upon him, *Gen.* 1. 26. Can there be any greater glory for a *Joseph*, for a Subject, than to be like his Prince?

Object. *What was the Image of God?*

Answ. The Schoolmen and Fathers have many curious (yet some necessary, though difficult) questions about this. I will omit all theirs,

Man made in a blessed estate.

and tell you onely what is the Apostle's judgment, *Col.* 3. 20. out of which this general description of God's Image may be thus gathered: *It is man's perfection of holiness, resembling God's admirable Holiness, whereby onely man pleaseth God.*

Eph. 4. 4, 23. The Image of God in man.

For all other inferiour creatures did carry the marks and footsteps of God's *Power, Wisdom, Goodness*, whereby all these Attributes were seen. One of the most perfect Attributes, his *Holiness*, he would have men onely appear *in*, and be made manifest by *man*, his best inferiour creature: as a King's wisdom and bounty appears in managing the affairs of all his Kingdom; but his Royal, Princely and most eminent perfections appear in the face and disposition of his Son, next under him. But more particularly this Image of God appeared in these four particulars.

1. In man's understanding.

1. In man's *Understanding*: this was like unto God's. Now *God's Image* here chiefly consisted in this particular, *viz.* As God saw himself, and beheld his own infinite, endless glory and excellency; so man was privy to God's excellency, and saw God most gloriously: as *Moses*, though a sinful man, saw him face to face; much more *Adam*, a perfect man. God loving man, could do no less than reveal himself to man.

2. In his affections.

2. In his Affections, the Image of God chiefly appeared in two things.

First, as God, seeing himself, loved himself: so *Adam*, seeing God, loved this God more than the World, more than himself. As

Iron

Iron put into the fire seems to be nothing but fire: so *Adam*, being beloved of God, was turned into a lump of love, to love God again. Man made in a blessed estate.

Secondly, as God delighted in himself; so did *Adam* delight in God, took sweet repose in the bosome of God. Methinks I see *Adam* rapt up in continual extasies in having this God. Prov. 8.

3. In his Will, the Image of God chiefly appeared in two things. 3 In man's will.

First, as God onely willed himself as his last end: so did *Adam* will God as his last end, not as man doth now.

Secondly, as God willed nothing but good; so did *Adam* will nothing (though not immutably) but good, for God's will was *his*.

4. In *his Life* God's Image did appear thus, that even as God, if he had assumed man's nature, would have lived outwardly, so did *Adam*: for God would have lived according to his own will, law, and rule, so did *Adam*. *Adam*'s body was the Lantern through which Holiness, like a Lamp burning in his heart, shined; this was God's Image, by means of which (as it is said in the description) he pleased God; similitude being the ground of love: and hence God did most dearly love him, and highly honour him to be Lord over all creatures; no evil (continuing in that estate) could hurt him: here was no sorrow, no sickness, no tears, no fears, no death, no hell; nor ever should have been, if there he had stood. 4. In his life.

Man made in a blessed estate.

Object. How was this Estate ours?

Answ. As Christs righteousnes is a *Believer's* by imputation, though he never performed it himself; so *Adam's* righteousnes and image was imputed to us, and accounted ours; for *Adam* received our stock or Patrimony, to keep it for us, and to convey it to us. Hence he proving Bankrupt, we lost it. But we had it in his hands, as an *Orphan* may have a great estate left him, though he never receive one penny of it from him that was his *Guardian*, that should have kept it for him, and conveyed it to him.

Use 1. The nature of sin.

Here see the horrible nature of sin, that plucks man down by the ears from his throne, from his perfection, though never so great. *Adam* might have pleaded for himself, and have said, Although I have sinned, yet it is but one, and the first fault. Lord, behold I am thy first-born; Oh pity my poor posterity, who are for ever undone if thou forgivest not. Yet see, one sin weighs him down and all his posterity (as we shall hear) into eternal ruine.

Use 2. God may curse a man if he keep not the Law.

Hence learn how justly God may require perfect obedience to all the law of every man, and curse him if he cannot perform it; Because man was at first made in such a glorious estate, wherein he had power given him to *please God perfectly*; God may therefore require this debt of perfect obedience. Now man is broke and in prison, in Hell he must lie for ever, if he cannot pay Justice every farthing; because God trusted him with a stock,

which

which if he had well improved, he might have paid all.

Man made in a blessed estate.

See what cause every man hath to lament his miserable estate he is now fallen into. For beggers children to live vagrants and poor, is not so lamentable as for a great Prince's children to become such. One never in favour with the Prince grieves not as he doth that was once in favour, but now cast out. Man is now rejected of God, that was beloved of God: he is now a Runnagate up and down the earth, that was once a Prince and Lord of all the World. This is one aggravation of the damneds sorrow; Oh the hopes, the means, the mercies that once I had! Can these, do these lament for the loss of their hopes and common mercies? Lord, what hearts then have men that cannot, do not, that will not lament the loss of such *special high favours* now gone, which once they had! It is said, that those that saw the glory of the first Temple wept when they saw the glory of the second, and how inferiour it was to the first. You that either have the Temple of God begun to be repaired in you, or not begun at all, Oh think of the Temple burnt, the glory of God now vanished and lost.

Use 3. Man hath cause to lament.

Man before his fall was a Prince and Lord over the world.

This speaks comfort to all God's people. If all *Adam's* posterity were perfectly righteous in him, then thou that art of the Bloud Royal, and in Christ, art perfectly righteous in him much more: inasmuch as the righteousness of the second *Adam* exceeds the first; so art thou more happy, more holy in the se-

Use 4. Comfort to God's people.

Man made in a blessed estate.

cond *Adam*, than ever the first in himself was: he might lose all his righteousness, but the second *Adam* cannot, hath not: so that if Christ may be damned, then thou mayest; else not.

Use 5. This likewise reproveth three sorts of people.

A threefold reprehension.

1. Such as are ashamed of holiness. Lord, what times are we fallen into now! The Image of God, which was once mens glory, is now their shame; and Sin, which is mens shame, is now their glory. The World hath raised up many false reports of holy courses, calling it folly and precisenes, pride, hypocrisie; and that, whatsoever shews men may make, they are as bad as the worst, if their sins were writ in their foreheads. Hence it cometh to pass that many a man, who is almost perswaded to be *a new man*, and to turn over a new leaf, dares not, will not, for shame of the World, enter upon religious courses. What will they think of me then? (saith he.) Men are ashamed to refuse to drink healths, and hence maintain them lawful. Our Gallants are ashamed to stay a mile behind the fashion: hence they will defend open and naked breasts, and strange apparel, as things comely. Oh time-servers! that have some *conscience* to desire to be honest, and to be reputed so, yet conform themselves to all *companies*. If they hear others swear, they are ashamed to reprove them: they are ashamed to enter the lists of holy discourse in bad company, and they will pretend discretion, and

Men for shame of the world are afraid to enter upon religious courses

we

we must not cast Pearls before swine; but the bottom of the business is, they are ashamed to be holy. Oh fearful! Is it a shame to be like God? Oh sinful wretches! It is a credit to be any thing but religious, and with *many* Religion is a shame. I wonder with what face thou dareſt pray, or with what look thou wilt behold the Lord of glory at the last day, who art ashamed of him now, that will be admired of all Men, Angels and Devils, then. Dost thou look for wages from Christ, that art ashamed to own Christ, or to wear his Livery?

Man made in a blessed estate.

2. It reproves them that hate holiness; which is more than to be ashamed of it.

3. It reproves them that content themselves with a certain measure of holiness. Perfect holiness was *Adam's* Image, whereby *he pleased God*: and shall a little holiness content thee?

Men that content themselves with a certain measure of holiness, and go no farther.

Now there are these three sorts of them.

1. The *Formalist*, who contents himself with some holiness, as much as will credit him.

The form and name of Religion is *honos*, honour, sometimes; but the power and practice of it is *onus*, a burthen: hence men take up the first, and shake off the second. And indeed the greatest part take up this course: if they have no goodness, they should be the shame, scorn, and table-talk of the times; therefore every man will for his honour's sake have this *form*. Now this form is according to the mould wherein he is cast. If his ac-

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quaintance be but civil, he will be like them; if they be more exact, as *to pray, read, confer*, he will not stay one inch behind them. If to be better than his companions, to bear the bell before them, will credit him, he will be so what-ever it cost him. But yet he never will be so exact in his course as to be hated for it, unless he perceives the hatred he contracts from some men shall be recompensed with the more love and credit by other men. He disguiseth himself according to the places or company he comes into. King *Joash* was a good man so long as *Jehoiada* the Priest lived. If a little Religion will serve to credit men, that shall serve for that time; if more in another place, you shall then have them commending good Men, good Sermons, good Books, and drop forth two or three good sentences: what will they think of him then? They cover themselves over with these Fig-leaves of common honesty, to cover their nakedness; they bait all their courses over with *honesty*, that they may catch, for they fish only for credit. One may trap these people thus: Follow them in their private houses, there is *worldliness, passion, looseness*; and to their private chambers, there they ordinarily neglect or shuffle over duties to their private vain thoughts. In this Tiring-house you shall then see these *stage-players*, their shop-windows are shut, here no honesty is to be seen scarce, because their gain, their respect comes not in at this door where none beholds them. Let either Minister, or any faithful friend,

Formal men conform to the company they keep.

The formalist's shuffling in God's duties.

friend, search, try, discover, accuse and condemn these men as rotten (though guilded) posts, as unsound, hollow-hearted wretches; their hearts will swell like Toads, and hiss like Snakes, and bark like Dogs against them that thus censure them, because they rob them of their God they served, their gain is gone.

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2. *The guilty self-condemned sinner*, that goes farther than the Formalist, and contents himself with so much holiness as will quiet him: and hence all the Heathen have had some Religion, because they had some conscience to trouble them. This man, if he hath lived in foul sins, and begins to be rack'd and troubled for them, he will then confess and forsake those sins; but how? as a dog doth his meat, not because he hates his carrion, but because he fears the cudgel: he performs holy duties, not because he will use them, but because he must use them, there is no quiet else. If *Conscience* be still, he omits duties. If *Conscience* cry and stir, he falls into duties; and so hath his good mood, as *Conscience* hath his fits. They boast and crow over hypocrites, because the holiness they have is not a bare shew: no, but it is to stop thy *Conscience*, and only to quiet the clamours of that. Thou dost bribe, and so quiet (the Bailiff) thy *Conscience*, by thy *praying*, *hearing*, and *sorrowing*; but *God* thy Judge hath heavy things to lay to thy charge, before whom thou shalt shortly with dread appear.

Rom. 12.

Many men leave their sins for fear of the punishment, not because they hate their sins.

Ezek. 33. 10.

Many men labour for just so much holiness as will save them.

3. *The pining and devout Hypocrite*, that, being pursued with the fear of Hell, goes farther,

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ther, and labours for just so much holiness as will save him onely, and carry him to Heaven at last. Hence the young man in the *Gospel* came with that great question to Christ, which many unsound hearts come with to Ministers now, *What he should do to inherit eternal life.* These people set up such a man in their thoughts to be a very honest man, and one doubtless that shall be saved; and hence they will take him to be their copy and sampler, and labour to do as he doeth, and to live just as he lives, and to hold opinions as he holds, and so hope to be saved. They will ask very inquisitively, *what is the least measure of grace*, and *the least grain of faith?* and the best Sermons are not such as humble them most, but such as flatter them best; wherein they may hear how well good desires are accepted of by God; which if they hear to be of that vertue to save them, *God* shall be served *only* with good desires, and the Devil *in their actions* all their lives.

Many men would have holiness, not to honour Christ, but to bear their charges to Heaven.

Thus they make any thing serve for God: they labour not after so much holiness as will honour Christ, but after just so much as will bear their charges to Heaven, and save themselves. For this is one of the greatest differences betwixt a child of God and an hypocrite. In their obedience, the one takes up duties out of love to Christ, to have him; and hence he mourns daily, because Christ is no greater gainer by him; the other out of love to himself, meerly to save his own soul; and hence he mourns for his sins, because they may damn him. Remember that place therefore, 1 *Cor.* 15. *ult.* Lastly,

Lastly, labour to get this Image of *God* renewed again. Honest men will labour to pay their debts: this is *God's debt*. How do men labour to be in the fashion? better to be out of the world than out of the fashion. To be like God is Heaven's fashion, Angels fashion, and it will be in fashion one day, when the *Lord Jesus* shall appear: then if thou hast the superscription and image of the Devil, and not the Image of God upon thee, God and Christ will never own thee at that day. Labour therefore to have *God's Image* restored again, and Satan's wash'd out: seek not, as many do, to purchase such and such a grace first: But,

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Use 6.

God's Image must be renewed.

To be like God is the fashion of Heaven and Angels.

How to gain the Image of God.

1. Labour to mortifie and subdue that sin which is opposite in thine heart to that grace. First *put off the old man*, and then *put on the new*, Eph. 4.

Rom. 6. 7.

2. Labour for a melting tender heart for the least sin. Gold is then only fit to receive the impression when it is tender and is melted: when thine heart is heated therefore at a Sermon, cry out, Lord, now strike, now imprint thine Image upon me.

3. Labour to see the Lord Jesus in his glory. For as wicked men looking upon the evil example of great ones in the world, that will bear them out, grow like them in villany: so the very beholding the *glorious grace in Christ*, the great *Lord of glory*, transformeth men into this Image, 2 *Cor.* 3. 16, 17. As the glass set full against the Sun receives not onely the beams, as all other dark bodies do, but the Image of the Sun: so the understanding with

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with open face beholding Christ, is turned into the Image and likeness of Christ. Men now-adays look only to the best mens lives, and see how they walk, and rest here: Oh look higher to this blessed face of God in Christ as thine own. As the application of the seal to the wax imprints the Image: so to view the grace of Christ as *all* thine, imprints the same Image strongly on thy soul. I come now to the third principal Head in order, which I shall insist upon out of *Rom.* 3. 23. *All have sinned, and are deprived of the glory of God.*

CHAP. III.

The third Principle. Man's misery by his Fall.

That all mankind is fallen by sin from that glorious estate he was made in, into a most woful and miserable condition.

THE Devil abusing the Serpent, and man abusing his own free-will, overthrew *Adam*, and in him all his posterity by sin, *Gen.* 3. 1, 2, 3, *&c.*

Now man's misery appears in these two things.

1. His misery in regard of Sin.

2. His misery in regard of the consequences of Sin.

1. His misery in regard of sin appears in these particulars.

Man's misery in regard of sin.

1. Every man living is born guilty of *Adam's* sin. Now the justice and equity of *God*, in laying this sin to every man's charge, though none of *Adam's* posterity personally committed it, appears thus. First,

First, If *Adam* ſtanding, all mankind had ſtood; then it is equal, that he *falling*, all his poſterity ſhould fall. All our eſtates were ventured in this ſhip; therefore if we ſhould have been partakers of his gains, if he had continued ſafe, it's fit we ſhould be partakers of his loſs too. Man's miſery by his fall.

But ſecondly, we were all in *Adam*, as a whole Countrey in a Parliament-man; the whole Countrey doth what he doth. And although we made no particular choice of *Adam* to ſtand for us, yet the Lord made it for us; who, being Goodneſs it ſelf, bears more good will to man, than he can or could bear to himſelf; and, being Wiſdom it ſelf, made the wiſeſt choice, and took the wiſeſt courſe for the good of man. For this made moſt for mens ſafety and quiet: for if he had ſtood, all fear of loſing our happy eſtate had vaniſhed; whereas if every man had been left to ſtand or fall for himſelf, a man would ever have been in fear of falling. Men were all in *Adam* as a whole Countrey is in a Parliament-man.

And again, this was the ſure way to have all mens eſtates preſerved: for having the charge of the eſtates of all men that ever ſhould be in the world, he was the more preſſed to look the more about him, and ſo to be more watchfull that he be not robbed, and ſo undo and procure the curſes of ſo many thouſands againſt him. *Adam* was the head of mankind, and all mankind naturally are members of that Head; and if the head invent and plot treaſon, and the head practiſe treaſon againſt the King or State, the whole body is found guilty, and *Adam* the head of mankind.

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and the whole body must needs suffer. *Adam* was the poisoned root and cistern of all mankind: now the branches and streams being in the root and spring *originally*, they therefore are tainted with the same poisoned principles. If these things satisfie not, God hath a day coming wherein he will reveal his own righteous proceedings before Men and Angels, *Rom.* 2.4.

Use I. The horrible nature of the first sin.

Oh that men would consider this sin, and that the consideration of it could humble peoples hearts! If any mourn for sin, it is for the most part for other foul actual sins, few for this sin that first made the breach and began the controversie betwixt God and Man. Next unto the sin against the *Holy Ghost*, and contempt of the *Gospel*, this is the greatest sin that crieth loudest in God's ears for vengeance day and night against a world of men. For now mens sins are against God in their base and low estates; but this sin was committed against *Jehovah*, when man was at the top of his preferment. Rebellion of a Traitor on a dunghil is not so great as of a Favourite in Court. Little sins against light are made horrible: no sin by any man committed was ever against so much light as *Adam* had. This sin was the first that ever displeased *God*. Drunkenness deprives God of the glory of *Sobriety*; Whoring, of *Chastity*: but this sin darkens the very Sun, defaces all the Image of God, the glory of Man, and the glory of God in Man; that is the first sin ever did thee mischief. This sin, like a Captain, hath gathered together all those troops and swarms of sins that now take

The sin of *Adam* defaced all the Image of God.

hold

hold upon thee. Thank this sin for an hard heart thou so much complainest of: thank this sin for that hellish darkness that overspreads thee. This hath raised Satan, Death, Judgment, Hell, and Heaven against thee.

Man's misery by his fall.

The hainousness of *Adam's* sin.

Oh consider these sins that are packt up in this evil. 1. Fearful *Apostasie* from God like a Devil. 2. Horrible *Rebellion* against God, in joyning sides with the Devil, and taking God's greatest enemy's part against God. 3. Woful *Unbelief*, in suspecting God's threats to be true. 4. Fearful *Blasphemy*, in conceiving the Devil (God's enemy and Man's murtherer) to be more true in his temptations than God in his threatning. 5. Horrible *Pride*, in thinking to make this sin of eating the Forbidden Fruit to be a step and a stair to rise higher, and to be like God himself.

1. Apostasie.
2. Rebellion.
3. Unbelief.
4. Blasphemy.
5. Pride.

6. Fearful *Contempt of God*, making bold to rush upon the sword of the threatning secretly, not fearing the Plague denounced.

6. Contempt of God.

7. Horrible *Unthankfulness*, when *God* had given him all but one tree, and yet he must be fingering that too.

7. Unthankfulness.

8. Horrible *Theft*, in taking that which was none of his own.

8. Theft.

9. Horrible *Idolatry*, in doting upon and loving the Creature more than God the Creator, who is blessed for ever.

9. Idolatry.

You therefore that now say, No man can say black is your eye, you have lived civilly all your dayes, look upon this one grievous sin, take a full view of it, which thou hast never shed one tear for as yet, and see thy misery by it,

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it, and wonder at God's patience; he hath spared thee who wast born branded with it, and hast lived guilty of it, and must perish for ever for it, if the Lord from Heaven pity thee not.

Secondly, dead in sin.

But here is not all: consider, Secondly, every man is born stark dead in sin, *Ephes.* 2. 1. he is born empty of every inward principle of life, void of all grace, and hath no more good in him (whatsoever he thinks) than a dead carrion hath. And he is under the power of sin, as a dead man is under the power of death, and cannot perform any act of life: their bodies are living coffins to carry a dead soul up and down in.

Best actions of the wicked, how sinful.

'Tis true (I confess) many wicked men do many good actions, as *praying, hearing, almsdeeds*; but it is not from any inward principle of life. External motives, like *plummets* on a dead (yet artificial) clock, set them a-running. *Jehu* was zealous, but it was only for a Kingdom; the Pharisees gave *alms* only to be seen of men. If one write a Will with a dead man's hand deceased, that Will cannot stand in any Law; it was not his Will, because it was not writ by him, by any inward principle of life of his own. Pride makes a man *preach*, pride makes a man *hear*, and *pray* sometimes. Self-love stirs up strange desires in men, so that we may say, this is none of God's act by his grace in the soul, but pride and self-love. Bring a dead man to the fire, and chafe him, and rub him, you may produce some heat by this external working upon him; but take him from the fire again and he is soon cold: so many a

man

man that lives under a ſound Miniſter, under the laſhes and knocks of a chiding, ſtriving *Conſcience*, he hath ſome heat in him, ſome affections, ſome fears, ſome deſires, ſome ſorrows ſtirred; yet take him from the *Miniſter*, and his chafing *Conſcience*, and he grows cold again preſently, becauſe he wants an inward principle of life.

Man's miſery by his Fall.

Uſe 2. Of lamentation.

Which point might make us to take up a bitter lamentation for every natural man. It is ſaid, *Exod.* 12. 30. *That there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not an houſe wherein there was not one found dead.* O Lord, in ſome Towns and Families what a world of theſe are there? Dead husband, dead wife, dead ſervants, dead children, walking up and down with their ſins, (as Fame ſaith ſome men do after death) with grave-cloaths about them; and God onely knows whether ever they ſhall live again or not. How do men lament the loſs of their dead Friends! Oh thou haſt a precious ſoul in thy boſome ſtark dead; therefore lament thine eſtate, and conſider it ſeriouſly.

How every Natural man is dead while he lives.

1. Dead men cannot ſtir.

Firſt, a dead man cannot ſtir, nor offer to ſtir: a wicked man cannot ſpeak one good word, or do any good action, if Heaven it ſelf did lie at the ſtake for doing it, nor offer to ſhake off his ſins, nor think one good thought. Indeed he may ſpeak and think of good things, but he cannot have good ſpeeches, nor good thoughts: as an holy man may think of evil things, as of the ſins of the times, but the thought of thoſe evil things is good, not evil: ſo *e contra*.

Man's misery by his Fall.

Secondly, a dead man fears no dangers, though never ſo great, though never ſo near. Let Miniſters bring a natural man tidings of the approach of the devouring plagues of God denounced, he fears them not.

2. Dead men fear no danger.

Thirdly, a dead man cannot be drawn to accept of the beſt offers. Let *Chriſt* come out of Heaven, and, fall about the neck of a natural man, and with tears in his eyes beſeech him to take his bloud, himſelf, his Kingdom, and leave his ſins, he cannot receive this offer.

3 Dead men refuſe the beſt offers.

Fourthly, a dead man is ſtark blind, and can ſee nothing, and ſtark deaf, and hears nothing, he cannot taſt any thing: ſo a natural man is ſtark blind, he ſees no God, no Chriſt, no wrath of the Almighty, no glory of Heaven. He hears the voice of a man, but he hears not the voice of God in a Sermon: *He ſavoureth not the things of God's Spirit.*

4. Dead men neither hear nor ſee. Mat. 25. 37, 38.

Fifthly, a dead man is ſenſleſs, and feels nothing: ſo, caſt mountains of ſin upon a wicked man, he feels no hurt, until the flames of hell break out upon him.

5. Dead men are ſenſleſs.

Sixthly, a dead man is a ſpeechleſs man, he cannot ſpeak unleſs it be like a Parrat.

6. Dead men are ſpeechleſs.

Seventhly, he is a breathleſs man. A natural man may ſay a prayer, or deviſe a prayer out of his memory and wit, or he may have a few ſhort-winded wiſhes; but to pour out his ſoul in prayer, in the boſome of God, with groans unutterable, he cannot. I wonder not to ſee ſo many Families without Family-prayer; Why? They are dead men, and lie rotting in their ſins.

7. Dead men are breathleſs.

Eighthly,

Eighthly, a dead man hath loſt all beauty; ſo a meer natural man hath loſt all glory; he is an ugly creature in the ſight of God, good Men, and Angels, and ſhall one day be an abhorring to all fleſh.

Man's miſery by his Fall.

8. Dead men want beauty.

Ninthly, a dead man hath his worms gnawing him: ſo natural men have the worm of conſcience breeding now, which will be gnawing them ſhortly.

9. Dead men have worms gnawing on them.

Laſtly, dead men want nothing but caſting into the grave: ſo there wants nothing but caſting into hell for a natural man. So that as *Abraham* loved *Sarah* well while living, yet when ſhe was dead, he ſeeks for a burying-place for her to carry her out of his ſight: ſo God may let ſome fearful judgement looſe, and ſay to it, Take this dead ſoul out of my ſight, *&c.* It was a wonder that *Lazarus*, though lying but four days in the grave, ſhould live again. Oh, wonder thou, that ever God ſhould let thee live, that haſt been rotting in thy ſin twenty, thirty, perhaps ſixty years together.

10. Dead men are caſt into the grave.

III. Every natural man and woman is born *full of all ſin*, *Rom.* 1. 29. as full as a Toad is of poiſon, as full as ever his skin can hold; mind, will, eyes, mouth, every limb of his body, and every piece of his ſoul is full of ſin. Their hearts are bundels of ſin: hence *Solomon* ſaith, *Fooliſhneſs is bound up in the heart of a child*; whole treaſures of ſin. *An evil man* (ſaith Chriſt) *out of the evil* treaſure *of his heart, bringeth forth evil things*; nay, raging ſeas of ſin. *The tongue is a world* of miſchief. Jam. 3. 6.

Thirdly, Natural men are born full of ſin.

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What is the heart then? *For out of the abundance of the heart the tongue speaketh*: so that look about thee and see, what-ever sin is broached, and runs out of any man's heart into his life through the whole world, all those sins are in thine heart; thy mind is a nest of all the foul Opinions and Heresies that ever were vented by any man; thy heart is a stinking sink-hole of all Atheisme, Sodomy, Blasphemy, Murther, Whoredom, Adultery, Witchcraft, Buggery, so that if thou hast any good thing in thee, it is but as a drop of Rose-water in a bowl of poyson; where fallen, it is all corrupted.

Hazael and Elisha.

It is true, thou feelest not all these things stirring in thee at one time, no more than *Hazael* thought he was or should be such a blood-sucker, when he asked the Prophet *Elisha* if he were a *Dog*: but they are in thee like a nest of Snakes in an old hedge. Although they break not out into thy life, they lie lurking in thy heart; they are there as a filthy puddle in a barrel, which runs not out, because thou haply wantest the temptation or occasion to broach and tap thine heart, or because of God's restraining grace by *Fear*, *Shame*, *Education*, and *good Company*, thou art restrained and bridled up. And therefore when one came to comfort that famous picture, pattern, and monument of God's justice by seven years horror and grievous distress of conscience, when one told him he never had committed such sins as *Manasses*, and therefore he was not the greatest sinner since the Creation, as he conceived;

Francis Spira.

ceived; he replied, that he should have been worse than ever *Manasses* was, if he had lived in his time, and been on his Throne. Man's misery by his Fall.

Mr. *Bradford* would never have looked upon any ones lewd life with one eye, but he would presently return within his own breast with the other eye, and say, *In this my vile breast remains that sin, which without God's special grace I should have committed as well as he.* Oh methinks this might pull down mens proud conceits of themselves, especially such as bear up and comfort themselves in their smooth, honest, civil life, such as through education have been washed from all foul sins: they were never tainted with whoredome, swearing, drunkenness, or prophaneness; and here they think themselves so safe, that God cannot find in his heart to have a thought of damning them. Mr. *Bradford.*

Oh consider of this point, which may make thee pull thine hair from thine head, and turn thy cloaths to sackcloth, and run up and down with amazement and paleness in thy face, and horror in thy conscience, and tears in thine eyes. What though thy life be smooth? what though thy outside, thy sepulchre be painted? Oh thou art full of rottenness, of sin, within. Guilty, not before men, as the sins of thy life make thee; but before God, of all the sins that swarm and roar in the whole world at this day: for God looks to the heart: guilty thou art therefore of heart-whoredom, heart-sodomy, heart-blasphemy, heart-drunkenness, heart-buggery, heart-

Man's misery by his Fall.

oppression, heart-idolatry; and these are the sins that terribly provoke the wrath of Almighty God against thee, *Isa.* 57. 17. *For the iniquity of his covetousness* (saith our Translation) *I smote him*; but the *Hebrew* renders it better, *For the iniquity of his concupiscence* (which is the sin of his heart and nature) *I smote him.* As a King is angry and musters up his Army against Rebels, not only which bring their Souldiers out to fight, but who keep Souldiers in their Trenches ready for to fight. These sins of thine heart are all ready armed to fight against *God* at the *watch-word* or *alarm* of any temptation; nay, I dare affirm, and will prove it, that these sins provoke God to anger, and are as bad, if not worse then the sins of thy life. For,

Sins of the heart worse then the sins of the life.

1. The sin of thine heart or nature is the cause, the womb that contains, breeds, brings forth, suckles all the litter, all the troup of sins that are in thy life; and therefore, giving life and being to all other, it's the greatest sin.

1.

2. Sin is more abundantly in the *heart* then in the life. An actual sin is but a little breach made by the sea of sin in thine heart, where all sin, all poison is met and mingled together. Every actual sin is but as a shred broken off from the great bottom of sin in the heart: and hence Christ saith, *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh; and out of the evil treasure of the heart we bring forth evil things.* A man spending money (I

2.

mean

mean *sin* in the life) is nothing to his treasure of sin in the heart.

Man's misery by his Fall.

3. Sin is continually in the heart. Actual sins of the life flie out like sparks, and vanish, but this brand is always glowing within. The Toad spits poyson sometimes, but it retains and keeps a poisonful nature always. Hence the Apostle calls it *Sin that dwells in me*, that is, which always lies and remains in me. So that, in regard of the sins of thy heart, thou dost rend in pieces and break, 1. All the Laws of God, 2. At one clap, 3. Every moment of thy life. Oh, methinks the thought of this might rend an heart of rock in pieces, to think I am always grieving God, at all times whatsoever I do.

3. Sins in the heart break out like sparks in the actions.

Rom. 7.

4. Actual sins are only in the life and outward Porch; sins of the heart are within the inward House. One enemy within the City is worse than many without; a Traitor on the Throne is worse than a Traitor in the open field. The heart is *Christ's throne*. A Swine in the best room is worse than in the outward house. More I might say, but thus you see sins of the *life* are not so bad, nor provoke God's wrath so fiercely against thee, as the sins of thine *heart*. Rejoice not therefore so much that thou hast not been so bad as others are, but look upon thy black sear, look within thine own heart, and lament that in regard of thy sins *there* thou art as bad as any: mourn not so much meerly that thou hast sinned, as that thou hast a nature so sinful, that it is thy nature to be proud, and

4. Sin of the life is as in the Porch, but sin in the heart is as in the House.

Sins of the heart provoke God more than the sins of the life.

Man's misery by his Fall.

thy nature to be vain and deceitful; and loath not onely thy sins but thy self for thy sin, being brim-full of unrighteousness. But here is not all; consider fourthly,

Every action is sinful as coming from a natural man.

IV. *That what-ever a natural man doeth is sin.* As the inside is full, so the out-side is nothing else but sin; at least in the sight of an holy God, though not in the sight of blind sinful men. Indeed he may do many things which for the matter of them are good; as he may *give alms, pray, fast, come to Church*, but as they come from him they are sin: as a man may speak good words, but we cannot endure to hear him speak, because of his stinking breath which defiles them. Some actions indeed from their general nature are *indifferent*, for all *indifferences* lie in *generals*: but every deliberate action considered *in individuo*, with all its circumstances, as *time, place, motive, end*, is either morally good, or morally evil, as may be proved easily; morally good in good men, morally evil in unregenerate and bad men. For let us see particular actions of wicked men.

Actions of wicked men are only evil.

1. Thoughts. 1. All their *thoughts* are onely evil, and that continually, *Gen.* 6. 5.

2. Words. Rom 3. 13. 2. All their *words* are sins, *Psalm* 50. 16. *Their mouths are open sepulchres*, which smell filthily when they are opened.

3. Civil actions. 3. All their *civil actions* are sins, as their eating, drinking, buying, selling, sleeping, and ploughing, *Prov.* 21. 4.

4. Religious actions. 4. All their *religious actions* are sins, as coming

coming to Church, praying, *Prov.* 15. 8, 9. 28. 9. fasting and mourning: roar and cry out of thy self till dooms-day, they are sins, *Isai.* 58. Man's misery by his Fall.

5. All their most *zealous actions* are sins; as *Jehu*, who kill'd all *Baal*'s Priests: because his action was outwardly and materially good, therefore God rewarded him with temporal favours; but because he had a Hawk's eye to get and settle a Kingdom to himself by this means, and so was Theologically evil, therefore God threatens to be revenged upon him, *Hosea* 1. 4. 5. Zealous actions.

6. Their *Wisdom* is sin. Oh, men are often commended for their wisdom, wit, and parts; yet those wits and that wisdom of theirs is sin, *Rom.* 8. *The wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God.* 6. Wisdom.

Thus all they have or do are sins; for how can he do any good action whose person is filthy? *A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit*: thou art out of Christ, therefore all thy good things, all thy kindnesses done unto the Lord, and for the Lord, as thou thinkest, are most odious to him. Let a woman seek to give all the content to her husband that may be, not out of any love to him, but onely out of love to another man, he abhors all that she doth. Every wicked man wants an inward principle of love to God and Christ, and therefore though he seeks to honour God never so much, all that he doth being done out of love to himself, God abhors all that he performs. All the Wicked men want a principle of love to God and Christ.

good

Man's Misery by his Fall.

good things a wicked man doth are for himself, either for self-credit, or self-ease, or self-content, or self-safety; he sleeps, prays, hears, speaks, professeth for himself alone: hence acting always for himself, he committeth the highest degree of Idolatry, he plucks God out of his Throne, and makes himself a *God*, because he makes himself his last end in every action: for a man puts himself in the room of God as well by making himself his *finis ultimus*, as if he should make himself *Primum principium*. Sin is a forsaking or departing from God. Now every natural man remaining always in a state of separation from God, because he always wants the bond of union, which is faith, is always sinning, God's curse lies upon him, therefore he brings out nothing but briers and thorns.

Jer. 20. 13.

Deut. 30.

Object. *Object.* But thou wilt say, *If our praying, and hearing be sin, why should we do these duties? We must not sin.*

Answ. *Answ.* 1. Good duties are good in themselves, although coming from thy vile heart they are sins.

2. It is less sin to do them, than to omit them; therefore if thou wilt go to hell, go in the fairest Path thou canst thither.

Why good duties must be performed though we sin in doing them.

3. Venture and try, it may be God may hear, not for thy prayers sake, but for his name's sake. The *unjust Judge* help the *poor widow*, not because he loved her suit, but for her *importunity*; and so be sure thou shalt have nothing if thou dost not seek. What though

though thou art a Dog? yet thou art alive, and art for the present under the Table. Catch not at Christ, snatch not at his bread, but wait till God give thee him; it may be thou mayest have him one day. Oh wonder then at God's patience, that thou livest one day longer, who hast all thy life-time, like a filthy toad, spit thy venome in the face of God, that he hath never been quit of thee. Oh look upon that black bill that will one day be put in against thee at the great day of account, where thou must answer with flames of fire about thine ears, nor only for thy drunkenness, thy bloudy oaths and whoring, but for all the actions of thy short life; and just so many actions, so many sins.

Man's misery by his Fall.

Thou hast painted thy face over now with good duties and good desires; and a little honesty amongst some men is of that worth and rarity, that they think God is beholden to them if he can get any good action from them. But when thy painted face shall be brought before the fire of God's wrath, then thy vileness shall appear before Men and Angels. Oh know it, that as thou dost nothing else but sin, so God heaps up wrath against the dreadful day of wrath.

Some men think God beholden to them for any good action.

Thus much for man's misery in regard of *sin*.

Now followeth his misery in regard of the *consequents* or miseries that follow upon sin. And these are

Man's misery in regard of consequents.

1. *Present.*
2. *Future.*

First,

Man's misery by his Fall.

First, man's present miseries that already lie on him for sin are these seven: that is,

1. Man's present miseries.

First, *God is his dreadful enemy*, *Psalm* 5. 5.

Quest. How may one know another to be his enemy?

Answ. 1. By their looks, 2. By their threats. 3. By their blows. So God

1. Hides his face from every natural man, and will not look upon him, *Isai.* 59. 2.

2. God threatens, nay curseth every natural man, *Gal.* 3. 10.

3. God gives them heavy, bloody lashes on their souls and bodies.

An outward estate no certain sign of God's blessing.

Never tell me therefore that God blesseth thee in thine outward estate: no greater sign of God's wrath, than for the Lord to give thee thy swing; as a Father never looks after a desperate Son, but lets him run where he pleases. And if God be thine enemy, then every creature is so too, both in Heaven and in Earth.

2.

Secondly, *God hath forsaken them, and they have lost God*, *Ephes.* 2. 12. It is said, that in the grievous Famine of *Samaria* *Doves-dung* was sold at a large price, because they wanted bread. O! men live and pine away without *God*, without *bread*; and therefore the dung of Worldly contentments is esteemed so much of: thou hast lost the sight of God, and the favour of God, and the special protection of God, and the government of God. *Cain's* punishment lies upon thee in thy natural estate, thou art a *Runagate* from

Isa. 55. 6.

the

the face of God, and from his face thou art hid. Many have grown mad to see their houses burnt, and all their goods lost. Oh, but God the greatest good is lost. This loss made *Saul* cry out in distress of conscience, 1 *Sam.* 28. 15. The Philistims make war against me, *and God is departed from me*: the loss of the sweetness of whose presence, for a little while only, made the Lord Jesus cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* whereas thou hast lost God all thy life-time. Oh, thou hast an heart of brass, that canst not mourn for his absence so long. The damned in Hell have lost God, and know it, and so the plague of desperate horror lieth upon them; thou hast lost God here, but knowest it not; and the plague of an hard heart lieth upon thee, thou canst not mourn for this loss.

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Thirdly, they are condemned men: condemned in the Court of God's Justice by the Law, which cries *Treason, Treason* against the most high God; and condemned in the Court of Mercy by the *Gospel*, which cries *Murther, Murther* against the Son of God, *John* 3. 18. so that every natural man is damned in Heaven and damned on Earth. God is thy all-seeing terrible Judge: Conscience is thine Accuser, an heavy Witness; this World is thy Gaol; thy Lusts are thy Fetters: in this Bible is pronounced and writ thy Doom, thy Sentence; Death is thy Hang-man, and that fire that shall never go out thy torment. The Lord hath in his infinite pati-

3. God is a wicked man's Judge, Conscience his Accuser, the World, his gaol, Lust his Fetters, the Word his Doom, Death his Hang-man, Fire his Torment.

ence

Man's misery by his Fall.

ence reprieved thee for a time: O take heed and get a pardon before the day of Execution come.

4. Fourthly, being condemned take him Gaoler, *he is a bondslave to Satan*, Eph. 2. 3. for, *his servants ye are whom ye obey*, saith Christ. Now every natural man doeth the Devil's drudgery, and carrieth the Devil's pack; and howsoever he saith he defieth the Devil, yet he sins, and so doeth his work. Satan hath overcome and conquered all men in *Adam*, and therefore they are under his bondage and dominion. And though he cannot compell a man to sin against his will, yet he hath power

1. First, to present and allure man's heart with a sinful temptation.

2. Secondly, to follow him with it, if at first he be something shie of it.

3. Thirdly, to disquiet and rack him if he will not yield, as might be made to appear in many instances.

4. Fourthly, besides, he knows mens humours, as poor, wandring, beggerly Gentlemen do their friends in necessity, (yet in seeming courtesie) he visits and applies himself unto them, and so gains them as his own. Oh! he is in a fearful slavery who is under Satan's dominion, who is

Man's fearful slavery under Satan.

1. A secret enemy.

1. *A secret enemy* to thee.

2. A deceitful enemy.

2. *A deceitful enemy* to thee, that will make a man believe (as he did *Evah*, even in her integrity) that he is in a fair way, when his condition is miserable.

3. He

3. He is a *cruel enemy* or Lord over them that be his ſlaves, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3. He gags them ſo that they cannot ſpeak, (as that man that had a *dumb devil*) neither for God, nor to God in prayer; he ſtarves them, ſo as no Sermon ſhall ever do them good; he robs them of all they get in God's Ordinances within three hours after *the market*, the Sermon, is ended.

Man's miſery by his Fall.

3. A cruel enemy.

4. He is a *ſtrong enemy*, *Luke* 11. 21. So that if all the Devils in Hell are able to keep men from coming out of their ſins, he will. So ſtrong an enemy, that he keeps men from ſo much as ſighing or groaning under their burthens and bondage; *Luke* 11. 21. *When the ſtrong man keeps the Palace, his goods are in peace.*

4. A ſtrong enemy.

Fifthly, *He is caſt into utter darkneſs*: as cruel Gaolers put their priſoners into the worſt dungeons; ſo Satan doth natural men, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4. They ſee no God, no Chriſt; they ſee not the happineſs of the Saints in light; they ſee not thoſe dreadful torments that ſhould now in this day of grace awaken them and humble them. Oh thoſe by-paths which thouſands wander from God in! they have no Lamp to their feet, to ſhew them where they erre. Thou that art in thy natural eſtate art born blind, and the Devil hath blinded thine eyes more *by* ſin, and God in juſtice hath blinded them worſe *for* ſin; ſo that thou art in a corner of Hell, becauſe thou art in utter darkneſs, where thou haſt not a glimpſe of any ſaving truth.

5. 1 Pet. 2. 9.

Sixthly,

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Sixthly, *They are bound hand and foot in this estate, and cannot come out*, Rom. 5. 6. 1 Cor. 2. 14. For all kind of sins, like chains, have bound every part and faculty of man, so that he is sure for stirring; and those are very strong in him, they being as dear as his members, nay as his life, Col. 3. 7. So that when a man begins to forsake his vile courses, and purposeth to become a new man, *Devils* fetch him back, *World* enticeth him, and locketh him up; and *Flesh* saith, Oh, it is too strict a course; farewell then merry days and good fellowship. Oh, thou mayest wish and desire to come out sometime, but canst not put strength to thy desire, nor indure to do it. Thou mayest hang down thy head like a Bulrush for sin, but thou canst not repent of sin; thou mayest presume, but thou canst not believe: thou mayest come half way, and forsake some sins, but not all sins: thou mayest come and knock at Heaven's gate, as the *foolish Virgins* did; but not enter in and pass through the gate: thou mayest see the Land of *Canaan*, and take much pain to go into *Canaan*, and mayest taste of the bunches of Grapes of that good Land; but never enter into *Canaan*, into Heaven, but lie bound, hand and foot, in this woful estate: and here thou mayest lie and rot like a dead carcase in his grave, until the Lord come and roll away the stone, and bid thee come out and live.

6. Wicked mens condition remediless.

7. Wicked men are near Hell.

Lastly, *They are ready every moment to drop into Hell.* God is a consuming fire against thee, and there is but one paper-wall of thy body between

tween thy soul and eternal flames. How soon may God stop thy breath? There is nothing but that between thee and hell; if that were gone, then farewell all. Thou art condemned, and the muffler is before thine eyes; God knows how soon the ladder may be turned: thou hangst but by one rotten twined thread of thy life over the flames of hell every hour.

Man's misery by his Fall.

Thus much of man's *present* miseries.

Now follow his *future* miseries, which are to come upon him hereafter.

Man's future miseries.

1. They must die either by a sudden, sullen, or desperate death, *Psal.* 89. 48. which though it is to a child of God a sweet sleep, yet to the wicked it is a fearful curse proceeding from God's wrath, whence, like a Lyon, he tears body and soul asunder: death cometh hissing upon him, like a fiery Dragon, with the sting of vengeance in the mouth of it; it puts a period to all their worldly contentments, which then they must forsake, and carry nothing away with them but a rotten winding-sheet. It is the beginning of all their woe, it is the Captain that first strikes the stroke, and then Armies of endless woes follow after, *Rev.* 6. 2. Oh, thou hadst better be a toad or a dog than a man, for there is an end of their troubles when they are dead and gone; they fall not as men from a steep hill, not knowing where they shall fall. *Nay* repentance is too late, especially if thou hadst lived under means before: it is either cold repentance, when

1. Wicked men die desperately.

Man's misery by his Fall.

the body is weak, and the heart is sick; or an hypocritical repentance, onely for fear of Hell; and therefore thou saiest, *Lord Jesus*, receive my soul. Nay, commonly then mens hearts are most heard, and therefore men die like lambs, and cry not out; then it's hard plucking thy soul from the Devil's hands, to whom thou hast given it all thy life by sin; and if thou dost get it back, dost thou think that God will take the Devil's leavings? Now thy day is past, and darkness begins to overspread thy soul; now flocks of Devils come into thy chamber, waiting for thy soul, to flie upon it as Mastive Dogs when the door is opened. And this is the reason why most men die quietly that lived wickedly, because Satan then hath them as his own prey; like *Pirats*, who let a Ship pass that is empty of goods, but shoot commonly at them that are richly laden. The Christians in some parts of the primitive Church took the Sacrament every day, because they did look to die every day. But these times wherein we live are so poysoned and glutted with their ease, that it is a rare thing to see the man that looks death stedfastly in the face one hour together: but death will lay a bitter stroke on these one day.

Most men die quietly that live wickedly.

2. After death they appear before the Lord to Judgment, *Heb.* 9. 27. their bodies indeed rot in their graves, but their souls return before the Lord to Judgment, *Eccles.* 12. 7. The general Judgment is at the

2. After death the soul is immediately condemned before God.

the end of the World, when both body and soul appears before God and all the World to an account. But there is a particular Judgement that every man meets with after this life, immediately at the end of his life, where the soul is condemned only before the Lord.

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You may perceive what this particular Judgment is; thus, by these four conclusions.

Particular judgment.

1. That every man should die the first day he was born, is clear; for *the wages of sin is death*: in justice therefore it should be paid of a sinful creature as soon as he is born.

1. Men should die the first day of life.

2. That it should be thus with wicked men, but that Christ begs their lives for a season, 1 *Tim.* 4. *He is the Saviour of all men*; (that is) not a Saviour of eternal preservation out of Hell, but a Saviour of temporal reservation from dropping into Hell.

2. Christ the Saviour of all men in this life.

3. That this space of time thus begged by Christ, is that season wherein onely man can make his peace with a displeased God, 2 *Cor.* 6. 2.

3. This life a time for men to make peace with God.

4. That if men do not thus within this out of time, when death hath dispatched them, judgement onely remains for them; that is, then their doom is read, their date of repentance is out, then their sentence of everlasting death is passed upon them, that never can be recalled again. And this is judgement after death. *He that judgeth himself* (saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31.) *shall not be judged of the Lord.* Now wicked men will not judge and condemn themselves

4. When death comes, 'tis too late to make peace with God.

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selves *in this life*, therefore *at the end of it* God will judge them. All natural men are lost in this life, but they may be found and recovered again: but a man's loss by death is irrecoverable, because there is no means after death to restore them, there is no friend to perswade, no Minister to preach, by which Faith is wrought, and men get into Christ; there is no power of returning or repenting then; for night is come, and the day is past.

Man's loss after death is irrecoverable; for by death all means are cut off.

After death all the thoughts of the wicked are taken up with the burthen of wrath.

Again, the punishment is so heavy, that they can only bear wrath, so that all their thoughts and affections are taken up with the burthen. And therefore *Dives* cries out, *I am tormented*. Oh that the consideration of this point might awaken every secure sinner! What will become of thine immortal soul when thou art dead? Thou sayest, *I know not, I hope well.* I tell thee therefore that which may send thee mourning to thy house, and quaking to thy grave: If thou diest in this estate, thou shalt not die like a Dog, nor yet like a Toad; but after death comes judgement: then farewel friends, when dying; and farewel God for ever, when thou art dead.

The terrour of Man's particular judgment.

Now the Lord open your eyes to see the terrors of this particular Judgement; which if you could see, (unless you were mad) it would make you spend whole nights and days in seeking to set all even with God.

I will shew you briefly the manner and nature of it in these particulars.

1. Thy

Man's misery by his Fall.

1. Thy ſoul ſhall be dragged out of thy body, as out of a ſtinking priſon, by the Devil the Gaoler, into ſome place within the bowels of the third Heavens, and there thou ſhalt ſtand ſtrip'd of all friends, all comfort, all creatures, before the preſence of *God*, *Luke* 9. 27. as at the Aſſiſes, firſt the Gaoler brings the priſoners out.

1. The ſoul dragged from the body.

2. Then thy ſoul ſhall have a new light put into it, whereby it ſhall ſee the glorious preſence of God; as priſoners brought with guilty eyes look with terror upon the Judge. Now thou ſeeſt no God abroad in the World, but then thou ſhalt ſee the Almighty *Jehovah*; which ſight ſhall ſtrike thee with that helliſh terror and dreadful horror, that thou ſhalt call to the Mountains to cover thee, *O rocks, rocks, hide me from the face of the Lamb, Rev. 6. ult.*

2. The ſoul receives a new light.

3. Then all the ſins that ever thou haſt or ſhall commit ſhall come freſh to thy mind; as when the priſoner is come before the face of the Judge, then his accuſers bring in their evidence: thy ſleepy Conſcience then will be in ſtead of a thouſand witneſſes, and every ſin then, with all the circumſtances of it, ſhall be ſet in order, armed with God's wrath round about thee, *Pſal.* 50. 21. As Letters writ with juice of Oranges, cannot be read until it be brought unto the fire, and then they appear: ſo thou canſt not read that bloudy Bill of Indictment thy Conſcience hath againſt thee *now*; but when thou ſhalt ſtand near unto God,

3. All ſin ſhall come to thy mind.

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a consuming fire, then what an heavy reckoning will appear? It may be thou hast left many sins now, and goest so far, and profitest so much, that no Christian can discern thee; nay, thou thinkest thy self in a safe estate: but yet there is one leak in thy ship that will sink thee; there is one secret hidden sin in thine heart, which thou livest in, as all unsound people do, that will damn thee. I tell thee, as soon as ever thou art dead and gone, then thou shalt see where the knot did bind thee, where thy sin was that now hath spoiled thee for ever; and then thou shalt grow mad to think, *Oh that I never saw this sin I loved, lived in, plotted, perfected mine own eternal ruine by, until now, when it is too late to amend!*

4. God takes his farewell of thee.

4. Then the Lord shall take his everlasting farewell of thee, and make thee know it too. Now God is departed from thee in this life, but he may return in mercy to thee again; but then the Lord departs with all his patience, to wait for thee no more, nor shall Christ be offered thee any more, no Spirit to strive with thee any more; and so shall pass sentence, though haply not vocally, yet effectually, upon thy soul, the Lord saying, *Depart thou cursed.* Thou shalt see indeed the glory of God that others find, but, to thy greater sorrow, shalt never taste the same, *Luke* 13. 28.

5. The soul surrendred into the hands of the Devil.

5. Then shall God surrender up thy forsaken soul into the hands of Devils, who, being

being thy Gaolers, muſt keep thee till the great day of Account: ſo that as thy friends are ſcrambling for thy Goods, and worms for thy Body, ſo Devils ſhall ſcramble for thy Soul. For as ſoon as ever a wicked man is dead, he is either in Heaven or in Hell. Not in Heaven, for no unclean thing comes there: if in Hell, then amongſt Devils, there ſhall be thine eternal lodging, 1 *Pet.* 3. 19. And hence thy forlorn ſoul ſhall lie mourning for the time paſt, *now* 'tis too late to recall again; groaning under the intolerable Torments of the wrath of God preſent, and amazed at the eternity of miſery and ſorrow that is to come; waiting for that fearful hour, when the laſt Trump ſhall blow, and then body and ſoul meet to bear that wrath, that fire that ſhall never go out. Oh, therefore ſuſpect and fear the worſt of thy ſelf now. Thou haſt ſeldom or never, or very little, troubled thy head about this matter, whether Chriſt will ſave thee or not, thou haſt ſuch ſtrong hopes and confidence already that he will: know, that it is poſſible thou mayeſt be deceived; and if ſo, when thou ſhalt know thy doom after death, thou canſt not get an hour more to make thy peace with God, although thou ſhouldeſt weep tears of blood. If either the muffler of Ignorance ſhall be before thine eyes, like an Handkerchief about the face of one condemned, or if thou art pinioned with any luſt, or if thou makeſt thine own pardon, proclaimeſt (becauſe

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For wicked men as ſoone as dead are in Hell.

After death no time to make peace with God.

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thou art sorry a little for thy sins, and resolvest never to do the like again) peace to thy soul; thou art one that after death shalt appear before the Lord to Judgement: thou that art thus condemned now, dying so, shalt come to thy fearful judgement after death.

There shall be a general judgement of soul and body at the end of the World, wherein they shall be arraigned and condemned before the great Tribunal-seat of Jesus Christ, *Jude* 14, 15. *2Cor.* 5. 10. The hearing of Judgement to come made *Felix* to tremble: Nothing of more efficacy to awaken a secure sinner, than the sad thoughts of this fiery day.

Object. But thou wilt ask me *How it may be proved that there will be such a day.*

Answ. I answer, God's justice calls for it. This World is the stage where God's *patience* and *bounty* act their parts, and hence every man will profess and conceive, because he feels it, that God is merciful: but God's *Justice* is questioned; men think God to be all mercy, and no justice, all honey, and no sting; now the wicked prosper in all their ways, are never punished, but live and die in peace, whereas the godly are daily afflicted and reviled. Therefore because this *Attribute* suffers a total eclipse almost now, there must come a day wherein it must shine out before all the World in the glory of it, *Rom.* 2. 5.

Why there must be a day of judgment.

The second reason is from the glory of Christ;

Christ: he was accused, arraigned, condemned by men; therefore he shall be the Judge of them, *John* 5. 27. For this is an ordinary piece of God's Providence towards his people, the same evil he casts them into now, he exalts them into the contrary good in his time. As the Lord hath a purpose to make *Joseph* Ruler over all *Egypt*, but first he maketh him a slave. God had a meaning to make Christ Judge of men, therefore first he suffers him to be judged of men.

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Quest. *But when shall this judgement-day be?* *Object.*

Answ. Though we cannot tell the day and hour particularly, yet this we are sure of, that when all the Elect are called, for whose sake the World stands, *Isaiah* 1. 9. when these pillars are taken away, then wo to the World; as when *Lot* was taken out of *Sodome*, then *Sodome* was burnt. Now it is not probable that this time will come as yet: for first Antichrist must be consumed, and not onely the scattered visible Jews, but the whole body of the Israelites must first be called, and have a glorious Church upon earth, *Ezekiel* 37. This glorious Church Scripture and Reason will inforce, which when it is called shall not be expired as soon as 'tis born, but shall continue many a year. *Answ.* When all the elect are called, then wo to the world. *Lot* being gone, *Sodom* was burnt.

Quest. *But how shall this Judgement be?* *Olject.*

Answ. The Apostle describes it, 1 *Thes.* 4. 16, 17. *Answ.*

1. Christ

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The manner of the last judgement.

1. Christ comes.

2. The Archangel's voice heard.

1. Christ shall break out of the third Heaven, and be seen in the Air, before any dead arise: and this shall be with an admirable shout, as when a King cometh to triumph among his Subjects, and over his enemies.

2. Then shall the voice of the *Arch-Angel* be heard. Now this *Arch-Angel* is Jesus Christ himself, as the Scripture expounds: being in the clouds of Heaven, he shall with an audible, Heaven-shaking shout say, *Rise you dead, and come to judgement*; even as he called to *Lazarus*, *Lazarus arise*.

3 The Trump blows.

3. Then the Trump shall blow; and even as at the giving of the Law, *Exod.* 19. it's said, *the Trumpet sounded*, much more louder shall it now sound when he comes to judge men that have broken the Law.

4 The dead arise.

4. Then shall the dead arise: the bodies of them that have died in the Lord shall *rise first*, then the others that live shall (like *Enoch*) be translated and changed, *1 Cor.* 15.

5. The Judge upon the Bench.

5. When thus the Judge, and Justices are upon their Bench at Christ's right hand, on their thrones, then shall the guilty prisoners be brought forth, and come out of their Graves like filthy Toads against this terrible storm: then shall all the wicked that ever were, or ever shall be, stand quaking before this glorious Judge, with the same bodies, feet, hands, to receive their doom.

Sinner consider the day of Judgment.

Oh consider of this day thou that livest

in thy sins now, and yet art safe: there is a day coming wherein thou mayest and shalt be judged.

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1. Who is the Judge?

1. Consider who shall be thy Judge: why, *Mercy*, *Pity*, *Goodness* it self, even Jesus Christ, that many times held out his bowels of compassion towards thee. A child of God may say, Yonder is my *brother*, *friend*, *husband*; but thou mayest say, Yonder is mine *enemy*. He may say at that day, Yonder is he that shed his blood to save me; thou mayest say, Yonder he comes whose heart I have pierced with my sins, whose blood I have despised. They may say, O come, Lord Jesus, and cover me under thy wings; but thou shalt then cry out, O rocks, fall upon me, and hide me from the face of the Lamb.

2. His coming is in flames of fire.

2. Consider the manner of his coming, 2 *Thes.* 1. 7. He shall come in flaming fire, the Heavens shall be on a flame, the Elements shall melt like scalding lead upon thee. When a house is on fire at midnight in a Town, what a fearful cry is there made? Then all the World shall cry Fire, Fire, and run up and down for shelter to hide themselves, but cannot find it, but say, Oh! now the gloomy day of blood and fire is come; here's for my pride, here's for my oaths, and the wages for my drunkenness, security, and neglect of duties.

3. The accusations against wicked men.

3. In regard of the heavy accusations that shall come against thee at that day. There's never a wicked man almost in the World,

Man's misery by his Fall.

World, as fair a face as he carries, but he hath at some time or other committed some such secret villany, that he would be ready to hang himself for shame, if others did know of it; as secret *whoredom*, *self-pollution*, speculative *wantonness*, men with *men*, women with *women*, as the Apostle speaks, *Rom.* 1. At this day all the World shall see and hear these privy pranks, then the Books shall be opened. Men will not take up a foul business, nor end it in private; therefore there shall be a day of publick hearing: things shall not be suddenly shuffled up, as carnal thoughts imagine, *viz.* that, at this day, first Christ shall raise the dead, and then the separation shall be made, and then the sentence past, and then suddenly the Judgement-day is done. No, no; it must take up some large quantity of time, that all the World may see the secret sins of wicked men in the World: and therefore it may be made evident from all Scripture and Reason, that this day of Christ's Kingly Office in *Judging* the World, will last haply longer than his private Administration now (wherein he is less glorious) in *governing the World*. Tremble thou Time-server, tremble thou Hypocrite, tremble thou that livest in any secret sin under the all-seeing eye of this Judge: thine own Conscience indeed shall be a sufficient witness against thee, to discover all thy sins at thy particular judgement, but all the World shall openly see thine hidden, close courses of darkness, to thine everlasting shame, at this day.

Eccles. *ult.* *vis.*

The Kingly Office of Christ may probably last longer than his private Administration.

4. In

4. In regard of the fearful Sentence that then ſhall be paſſed upon thee; *Depart thou curſed creature into everlaſting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Thou ſhalt then cry out, Oh mercy, Lord! Oh a little mercy! No, will the Lord Jeſus ſay, I did indeed once offer it you, but you refuſed, therefore *Depart.* Then thou ſhalt plead again, Lord, if I muſt depart, yet bleſs me before I go. No, no, Depart *thou curſed.* Oh but, Lord, if I muſt depart curſed, let me go into ſome good place. No, depart thou curſed *into hell-fire.* Oh Lord, that's a torment I cannot bear; but if it muſt be ſo, Lord, let me come out again quickly. No, depart thou curſed into *everlaſting* fire. Oh Lord, if this be thy pleaſure, that there I muſt abide, let me have good company with me. No, depart thou curſed into everlaſting fire, *prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* This ſhall be thy ſentence. The hearing of which may make the rocks to rend. So that, go on in thy ſin and proſper, deſpiſe and ſcoff at God's Miniſters and proſper, abhorre the power and practice of Religion, as a too preciſe courſe, and proſper; yet know it, there will a day come, when thou ſhalt meet with a dreadful Judge, a doleful Sentence. Now is thy day of ſinning, but God will have ſhortly his day of condemning.

Man's miſery by his Fall.

4. The ſentence that ſhall paſs againſt them.

5. When the Judgement-day is come, then the fearful wrath of God ſhall be poured out, and piled upon their bodies and ſouls, and the breath of the Lord, like a ſtream of brim-

5 God's wrath ſhall be poured out on body and ſoul.

Man's misery by his Fall.

brimstone, shall kindle it; and here thou shalt lie burning, and none shall ever quench it. This is the execution of a sinner after judgment, *Rev.* 21.8.

Wherein consists the wrath of God,
1. Absence from God.

Now this wrath of God consists in these things.

1. Thy soul shall be banished from the face and blessed sweet presence of God and Christ, and thou shalt never see the face of God more. It is said, *Acts* 20. that *they wept sore, because they should see* Paul's *face no more.* Oh, thou shalt never see the face of *God, Christ, Saints* and *Angels* more. Oh heavy doom, to famish and pine away for ever without one bit of bread to comfort thee, one smile of *God* to refresh thee! Men that have their sores running upon them must be shut up from the presence of men sound and whole. Oh, thy sins, like plague-sores run on thee; therefore thou must be shut out like a Dog from the presence of God, and All his people, 2 *Thes.* 1. 9.

2. God a consuming fire.

2. God shall set himself like a consuming infinite fire against thee, and tread thee under his feet, who hast by sin trod him and his glory under foot all thy life. A man may devise exquisite torments for another, and great power may make a little stick to lay on heavy strokes: but great power, stirred up to strike from great fury and wrath, makes the stroke deadly. I tell thee, all the wisedom of God shall then be set against thee, to devise torments for thee, *Mich.* 2. 3. There was never such wrath felt or conceived

ceived as that which the Lord hath deviſed a-gainſt thee, that liveſt and dieſt in thy natu-ral eſtate: hence it is called *wrath to come*, 1 *Theſſ.* 1. *ult.* The torment which wiſedom ſhall deviſe, the Almighty power of God ſhall inflict upon thee; ſo as there was ne-ver ſuch power ſeen in making the world, as in holding a poor creature under this wrath, that holds up the ſoul in being with one hand, and beats it with the other, ever burning like fire againſt a creature, and yet that creature never burnt up, *Rom.* 9. 22. Think not this cruelty, it's juſtice: what cares God for a vile wretch, whom nothing can make good while it lives? If we have been long in hewing a block, and we can make no meet veſſel of it, put it to no good uſe for our ſelves, we caſt it into the fire: God heweth the by *Sermons*, *ſickneſs*, *loſſes* and *croſſes*, *ſudden death*, *mercies* and *miſeries*, yet nothing makes thee better; what ſhall God do with thee, but caſt thee hence? Oh, conſider of this wrath before you feel it. I had rather have all the World burn-ing about my ears, then to have one blaſt-ing frown from the bleſſed face of an infi-nite and dreadfull God. Thou canſt not endure the torments of a little Kitchin fire on the tip of thy finger, not one half hour together: how wilt thou bear the fury of this infinite, endleſs, conſuming fire in body and ſoul throughout all eternity?

Man's miſery by his Fall.

Men were better have the World burnt about their ears, then to have one frown from God's face.

3. The never-dying worm of a guilty conſcience ſhall torment thee, as if thou hadſt

3 A guilty conſcience a never-dying worm.

Man's misery by his Fall.

hadst swallowed down a living poysonful snake, which shall lie gnawing and biting thine heart for sin past, day and night. And this worm shall torment thee by shewing the cause of thy misery, that is, that thou didst never care for him that would have saved thee. By shewing thee also thy sins against the Law; by shewing thee thy sloth, whereby thy happiness is lost. Then shall thy conscience gnaw to think, so many nights I went to bed without prayer, and so many dayes and hours I spent in feasting, and foolish sporting: O, if I had spent half that time, now misspent, in praying, in mourning, in meditation, yonder in Heaven had I been. By shewing thee also the means that thou once hadst to avoid this misery: Such a Minister I heard once, that told me of my particular sins, as if he had been told of me: such a friend perswaded me once to turn over a new leaf: I remember so many knocks God gave at this iron heart of mine, so many mercies the Lord sent; but Oh, no means could prevail with me. Lastly, by shewing thee how easily thou mightest have avoided all these miseries: Oh, once I was almost perswaded to be a Christian; but I suffered my heart to grow dead, and fell to *loose company*, and so lost all. The Lord Jesus came unto my door and knocked, and if I had done that for Christ which I did for the Devil many a time, to open at his knocks, I had been saved. A thousand such bites will this worm give at thine heart,

which

which shall make thee cry out, Oh time, time! Oh Sermons, Sermons! Oh, my hopes and my helps are now lost, that once I had to save my lost soul!

Man's misery by his Fall.

4. Thou shalt take up thy lodging for ever with Devils, and they shall be thy companions: him thou hast served here, with him must thou dwell there. It scares men out of their wits almost, to see the Devil, as they think, when they be alone; but what horror shall fill thy soul when thou shalt be banished from Angels society, and come into the fellowship of Devils for ever?

4. To lodge with the Devils in Hell for ever.

5. Thou shalt be filled with final despair. If a man be grievously sick, it comforts him to think it will not last long. But if the Physician tell him he must live all his life-time in this extremity, he thinks the poorest begger in a better estate than himself. Oh, to think when thou hast been millions of years in thy sorrows, then thou art no nearer thy end of bearing thy misery than at the first coming in! Oh! I might once have had mercy and Christ, but no hope now ever to have one glimpse of his face, or one good look from him any more.

5. Final despair in an irrecoverable condition.

6. Thou shalt vomit out blasphemous oaths and curses in the Face of God the Father for ever, and curse God that never elected thee, and curse the Lord Jesus that never shed one drop of bloud to redeem thee, and curse God the holy Ghost that passed by thee and never called thee, *Rev.* 16. 9. And here thou shalt lie and weep, and

6. Blaspheming and cursing for ever.

Man's misery by his fall.

gnash thy teeth in spite against God and thy self, and roar, and stamp, and grow mad, that there thou must lie under the curse of God for ever. Thus (I say) thou shalt lie blaspheming, with God's wrath like a pile of fire on thy soul burning, and flouds, nay seas, nay more, seas of tears (for thou shalt for ever lie weeping) shall never quench it. And here, which way soever thou lookest, thou shalt see matter of everlasting grief. Look up to Heaven, and there thou shalt see (Oh!) that God is for ever gone. Look about thee, thou shalt see Devils quaking, cursing God; and thousands, nay millions of sinful, damned creatures crying and roaring out with doleful shriekings; Oh the day that ever I was born! Look within thee, there is a guilty conscience gnawing. Look to time past; Oh those golden dayes of grace and sweet seasons of mercy are quite lost and gone! Look to time to come, there thou shalt behold evils; troups and swarms of sorrows, and woes, and raging waves, and billows of wrath coming roaring upon thee. Look to time present; Oh, not one hour or moment of ease or refreshing, but all curses meet together, and feed upon one poor lost immortal soul, that never can be recovered again! No God, no Christ, no Spirit to comfort thee, no Minister to preach unto thee, no friend to wipe away thy continual *Tears*; no Sun to shine upon thee, not a bit of bread, not one drop of water to cool thy tongue.

Misery incompasseth those in Hell.

This

This is the misery of every natural man. Now do not thou shift it from thy self, and say, *God is merciful.* True, but it is *to very few*, as shall be proved. 'Tis a thousand to one if ever thou be one of that small number whom God hath picked out to escape this wrath to come. If thou dost not get the Lord Jesus to bear this wrath, farewell God, Christ, and God's mercy for ever. If Christ had shed seas of blood, set thine heart at rest, there is not one drop of it for thee, until thou comest to see, and feel, and groan under this miserable estate. I tell thee, Christ is so far from saving thee, that he is thine enemy. If Christ were here, and should say, Here is my blood for thee, if thou wilt but lie down and mourn under the burthen of thy misery, and yet for all his speeches thy dry eyes weep not, thy stout heart yields not, thy hard heart mourns not, as to say, Oh! I am a sinful, lost, condemned, cursed, dead creature; what shall I do? dost not think but he would turn away his face from thee, and say, Oh! thou stony, hard-hearted creature, wouldst thou have me save thee from thy misery, and yet thou wilt not groan, sigh, and mourn for deliverance to me out of thy misery? If thou likest thine estate so well, and prizest me so little, perish in thy misery for ever.

Man's misery by his Fall.

Oh, labour to be humbled day and night under this thy woful estate. Thou art guilty of *Adam's* grievous sin; will this break thine heart? *No.* Thou art dead in sin,

The scope of knowing our miseries is, to be humbled.

Man's misery by his fall.

and top-full of all sin; will this break thine heart? *No.* Whatsoever thou doest, hast done, shalt do, remaining in this estate, is sin; will this break thine heart? *No.* God is thine enemy, and thou hast lost him; will this break thy heart? *No.* Thou art condemned to die eternally, Satan is thy Gaoler, thou art bound hand and foot in the bolts of thy sins, and cast into utter darkness, and ready every moment to drop into Hell; will this break thine heart? *No.* Thou must die, and after that appear before the Lord to Judgement, and then bear God's everlasting insupportable wrath, which rends the Rocks, and burns down to the bottom of Hell; will this break thine hard heart, man? *No.* Then farewell Christ for ever, never look to see a Christ until thou doest come to feel thy misery out of Christ. Labour therefore for this, and the Lord will reveal the Brazen Serpent, when thou art in thine own sense and feeling stung to death with the fiery Serpents.

So I come to open the fourth principal Point.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

That the Lord Jesus Christ is the only means of Redemption and deliverance out of this estate.

The fourth Principle. Christ the onely Redeemer by price.

Doct. Christ our Redeemer.

IN *whom we have Redemption through his blood*, Ephes. 1. 7. which plainly demonstrates that

Jesus Christ is the only means of man's Redemption and deliverance out of his bondage and miserable estate.

And this is the Doctrine I shall now insist upon.

When the Israelites were in bondage and misery, he sends *Moses* to deliver them. When they were in *Babylon*, he stirred up *Cyrus* to open the prison gates to them. But when all mankind is under spiritual misery, he sends the Lord Jesus, God and Man, to redeem him, *Acts* 4. 12.

Object. How men are redeemed.

Quest. How doth Christ redeem men out of this misery?

Answ. 1. By price.

Answ. By *paying a price for them*, 1 *Cor.* 6. *ult.* God's mercy will be manifested in saving some, and his justice must be satisfied by having satisfaction or price made and paid for man's sin.

Hence Christ satisfieth God's Justice,

1. By standing in the room.

First, by standing in the room of all them whom mercy decreeth to save. A Surety standeth in the room of a Debtor, *Heb.* 7. 22.

Christ our onely Redeemer

As the first *Adam* stood in the room of all mankind fallen: so Christ standeth in the room of all men rising, or to be restored again.

2. By taking away the guilt of their sin.

Secondly, by taking from them, in whose room he stood, the eternal guilt of all their sins, and by assuming the guilt of all those sins unto himself, 2 *Cor.* 5. 22. Hence *Luther* said, Christ was the greatest sinner by imputation.

3. By bearing the curse for sin.

Thirdly, by bearing the curse and wrath of God kindled against sin. God is holy, and when he seeth sin sticking only by imputation to his own Son, he will not spare him, but his wrath and curse must he bear, *Gal.* 3. 13. Christ drinks up the cup of all the Elect at one draught, which they should have been sipping and drinking, and tormented with, millions of years.

4. By making us perfect. Dan. 9. 24.

Fourthly, by bringing into the presence of God perfect righteousness, *Rom.* 5. 21. for this also God's Justice required, *perfection*, conformity to the Law, as well as (*perfect satisfaction*) suffering for the wrong offered to the Law-giver. Justice thus requiring these four things, Christ satisfies Justice by performing them, and so pays the price.

Christ a Redeemer by strong hand.

2. Christ is a *Redeemer* by strong hand. The first Redemption by Christ is finished in Christ's person at his Resurrection; the second is begun by the Spirit in man's vocation, and ended at the day of Judgment: as money is first paid for a Captive in *Turky*,

and

and then, because he cannot come to his own Prince himself, he is fetcht away by strong hand.

Christ our onely Redeemer.

Here is encouragement to the vilest sinner, and comfort to the self-succourless and loost sinner, who have spent all their money, their time and endeavours upon those duties and strivings that have been but poor Physicians to them. O look up here to the Lord Jesus, who can do that cure for thee in a moment, which all creatures cannot do in many years. What bolts, what strong fetters, what unruly lusts, temptations and miseries art thou lockt into? Behold, the Deliverer is come out of *Sion*, having satisfied Justice, and paid a price to ransome poor Captives, *Luke* 4. 18. with the keys of Heaven, Hell, and thy unruly heart in his hand, to fetch thee out with great mercy and strong hand: Who knows but thou poor prisoner of Hell, thou poor Captive of the Devil, thou poor shackled sinner, mayest be one whom he is come for? Oh look up to him, sigh to Heaven for deliverance from him, and be glad and rejoyce at his coming.

Use 1. Of encouragement. Christ came down from Heaven to relieve poor Captives bound in fetters of sin.

This strikes terror to them, that, though there is a means of deliverance, yet will lie in their misery, never groan, never sigh to the Lord Jesus for deliverance; nay, that rejoyce in their bondage, and dance to Hell in their bolts; nay, that are weary of deliverance, that sit in the stocks when they are at prayers, that come out of the Church when

Use 2. Of terror.

Christ our onely Redeemer.

the tedious Sermon runs somewhat beyond the hour, like prisoners out of a Gaol; that despise the Lord Jesus, when he offers to open the doors, and so let them out of that miserable estate. Oh poor creatures! is there a means of deliverance, and dost thou neglect, nay, despise it? Know it, that this will cut thine heart one day, when thou art hanging in thy gibbets in Hell, to see others standing at God's right hand, redeemed by Christ: thou mightest have had share in their honour: for there was a Deliverer come to save thee, but thou wouldst have none of him. Oh, thou wilt lie yelling in those everlasting burnings, and tear thy hair, and curse thy self: From hence might I have been delivered, but I would not. Hath Christ delivered thee from Hell, and hath he not delivered thee from thine Ale-house? Hath Christ delivered thee from Satan's society, when he hath not delivered thee from thy loose company yet? Hath Christ delivered thee from burning, when thy faggots, thy sins grow in thee? Is Christ's bloud thine, that makest no more account of it, nor feelest no more virtue from it than in the bloud of a chicken? Art thou redeemed? dost thou hope by Christ to be saved, that didst never see, nor feel, nor sigh under thy bondage? Oh, the Devils will keep holy-day (as it were) in Hell, in respect of thee, who shalt mourn under God's wrath, and lament, Oh, there was a means to deliver us out of it, but thou shalt mourn for

The neglect of our deliverance by Christ will prove a cut at the last day.

ever

ever for thy misery. And this will be a Bodkin at thine heart one day, to think there was a Deliverer, but I wretch would none of him. Christ our onely Redeemer.

Here likewise is matter of reproof to such as seek to come out of this misery from and by themselves. If they be *ignorant*, they hope to be saved by their good meaning and prayers: if *civil*, by paying all they owe, and doing as they would be done by, and by doing no body any harm. If they be troubled about their *estates*, then they lick themselves whole by their mourning, repenting and reforming. Oh, poor stubble! canst thou stand before this consuming fire without sin? Canst thou make thy self a Christ for thy self? canst thou bear and come from under an infinite wrath? canst thou bring in perfect righteousness into the presence of God? This Christ must do, else he could not satisfie and redeem. And if thou canst not do thus, and hast not Christ, *desire* and *pray*, that Heaven and Earth shake, till thou hast worn thy tongue to the stumps; *endeavour* as much as thou canst, till others commend thee for a diligent Christian; *mourn* in some wilderness till dooms-day; dig thy grave there with thy nails, weep buckets full of hourly tears, till thou canst weep no more; *fast* and *pray* till thy skin and bones cleave together; *promise* and *purpose* with full resolution, to be better; nay, *reform* thy head, heart, life and tongue, and some, nay all sins: live like an Angel, shine like a Sun, walk

Use 3. Of reproof.

Christ our onely Redeemer.

walk up and down the World like a distressed Pilgrim going to another Countrey, so that all Christians commend and admire thee; die ten thousand deaths; lie at the fire-back in Hell so many millions of years as there be piles of grass on the earth, or sands upon the Sea-shore, or stars in Heaven, or motes in the Sun: I tell thee, not one spark of God's wrath against thy sin shall be quenched by all these *duties*, nor by any of these *sorrows* or *tears*; for, these are not the bloud of Christ. Nay, if all the Angels and Saints in Heaven and earth should pray for thee, these cannot deliver thee; for they are not the bloud of Christ. Nay, God as a Creator having made a Law, will not forgive one sin without the bloud of Christ. Nay, Christ's bloud will not do it neither, if thou dost joyn never so little that thou hast or dost, unto Jesus Christ, and makest thy self or any of thy duties copartners with Christ in that great work of saving thee. Cry out therefore as that blessed Martyr did, *None but Christ, none but Christ.*

Gal. 5. 2.

Use 4. Be watchful.

Take heed of neglecting or rejecting so great salvation by *Jesus Christ*. Take heed of spilling this potion; that only can cure thee.

Object.

But thou wilt say, *This means of Redemption is only appointed for some, it is not intended for all, therefore not for me, therefore how can I reject Christ?*

Answ.

It is true, Christ spent not his breath to pray for all, *John* 17. 9. *I pray for them, I*

pray

pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine; much less his bloud for all, therefore he was never intended as a Redeemer of all: but that he is not intended as a deliverer of thee, how doth this follow? How dost thou know this? Christ our onely Redeemer.

But, secondly, I say, though Christ be not intended for *all*, yet he is *offered* unto all, and therefore unto thee. And the ground is this chiefly;

The universal offer of Christ ariseth not from Christ's Priestly Office immediately, but from his Kingly Office, whereby the Father having given him all power and dominion in Heaven and Earth, he hereupon commands all men to stoop unto him, and likewise bids all his Disciples, and all their successors, to go and preach the Gospel to every creature under Heaven, *Matth.* 28. 18, 19. For Christ doth not immediately offer himself to all men as a Saviour, whereby they may be encouraged to serve him as a King: but first as a King commanding them to cast away their weapons, and stoop unto his Sceptre, and depend upon his free mercy, acknowledging, if ever he save me, I will bless him; if he damn me, his name is righteous in so dealing with me. The offer of Christ *universal*, and why. Mark 16. 15.

But that I may fasten this exhortation, I will shew these four things.

I. The Lord Jesus is offered to every particular person: which I shall shew thus: I.

What

Christ our onely Redeemer.

What hast thou to say against it, that thou dost doubt of it? It may be thou wilt plead,

Object. Oh, I am so ignorant of my self, God, Christ, or his will, that surely the Lord offers no Christ to me.

Answ. Yes, but he doth though thou liest in utter darkness. Our blessed Saviour glorified his Father for *revealing* the Mystery of the *Gospel* to *simple men*, neglecting those that carried the chief *reputation* of wisdom in the World. The parts of none are so low, as that they are beneath the gracious regard of Christ. God bestoweth the best fruits of his love upon mean and weak persons *here*, that he might confound the pride of Flesh the more. Where it pleaseth him to make his choice, and to exalt his mercy, he passeth by no degree of wit, though never so uncapable.

Prov. 9. 4.

Prov. 1. 22, 23.

Object. But thou wilt say, I am an enemy to God, and have a heart so stubborn and loth to yield; I have vexed him to the very heart by my transgressions.

Answ. Yet he beseecheth thee to be reconciled. Put case thou hast been a sinner, and rebellious against God; yet so long as thou art not found amongst malicious opposers and underminers of his Truth, never give way to despairing thoughts, thou hast a merciful Saviour.

Object. But I have despised the means of reconciliation, and rejected mercy.

Answ. Yet God calls thee to return: *Thou hast*

plaid

plaid the harlot with many lovers, yet turn again to me, saith the Lord, Jer. 3. 1. Cast thy self into the arms of Christ, and if thou perish, perish there: if thou dost not, thou art sure to perish. If mercy be to be had any where, it is by seeking to Christ, not by turning from him. Herein appears Christ's love to thee, that he hath given thee a heart in some degree sensible: he might have given thee up to *hardness*, *security* and *prophaneness*; of all spiritual judgements the greatest. But he that died for his enemies will in no wise refuse those, the desire of whose soul is towards him. When the Prodigal set himself to return to his father, his father stays not for him, but meets him in the way. If our sins displease us, they shall never hurt us; but we shall be esteemed of God to be that which we desire and labour to be, *Psalm* 145. 19.

Christ our onely Redeemer.

Christ casts off none that desire to come unto him.

But can the Lord offer Christ to me, so poor, that have no strength, no faith, no grace, nor sense of my poverty?

Object.

Yes, even to thee: why should we except our selves, when Christ doth not except us? *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden.* We are therefore poor, because we know not our riches. We can never be in such a condition, wherein there will be just cause of utter despair. *He that sits in darkness and seeth no light*, no light of comfort, no light of God's countenance, *yet let him trust in the name of the Lord.* Weaknesses do not debar us from mercy; nay, they in-

Answ. Christ calls all sinners to come unto him without exception.

Christ our onely Redeemer.

incline God the more. The husband is bound to bear with the wife, *as being the weaker vessel*; and shall we think God will exempt himself from his own Rule, and not bear with his weak Spouse?

Object. But is this offer made to me that cannot love, prize, nor desire the *Lord Jesus*?

Answ. Christ owns men, though they are weak, and cannot prize him.

Yes, to thee; Christ knows how to pity us in this case. We are weak, but we are his. A father looks not so much at the blemishes of his child, as at his own nature in him; so Christ finds matter of love from any thing of his own in us. A Christian's carriage towards Christ may in many things be very offensive, and cause much strangeness; yet (so long as he resolves not upon any known evil) Christ will own him, and he Christ.

Object. Oh, but I have fallen from God oft since he hath enlightned me, and doth he tender Christ to *me*?

Answ. Thou must know that Christ hath married every believing soul to himself, and that where the work of grace is begun, sin loseth strength by every new fall. If there be a spring of sin in thee, there is a spring of mercy in God, and a fountain daily opened to wash thy uncleanness in. *Adam* (indeed) lost all by once sinning: but we are under a better Covenant, a Covenant of Mercy, and are encouraged by the Son to go to the Father every day for the sins of that day.

Object. If I was willing to receive Christ, I might have Christ offered to me; but will the Lord offer

offer him to such one as desires not to have *Christ*?

Yes, (saith our Saviour) *I would have gathered you as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and you would not.* We must know, a creating power cannot only bring something out of *nothing*, but contrary out of *contrary*; of unwilling God can make us *willing people*. There is a promise of *pouring clean water upon us*; and Christ hath taken upon him to purge his Spouse, and make her fit for himself.

Christ not onely Redeemer.

Answ. Christ offers himself to those that do not desire him.

What hast thou now to plead against this strange kindness of the Lord in offering Christ to thee? Thou wilt say, it may be,

Object.

Oh! I fear time is past; Oh! time is past. I might once, once have had Christ; but now mine heart is sealed down with hardness, blindness, unbelief: Oh! time is now gone.

Answ: No time past to receive Christ.

No, not so; see *Isa.* 65. 1,2,3. *All the day long God holdeth out his hand to a backsliding and rebellious people.* Thy day of grace, thy day of means, thy day of life, thy day of God's striving with thee and stirring of thee, still lasts.

Object.

But if God be so willing to save, and so prodigal of his Christ, why doth he not give me Christ, or draw me to Christ?

Answ.

I answer, What command dost thou look for to draw thee to *Christ*, but this word *Come*? Oh come thou poor, forlorn, lost, blind, cursed nothing; I will save thee, I will

Christ our onely Redeemer.

will enrich thee, I will forgive thee, I will enlighten thee, I will bless thee, I will be all things unto thee, do all things for thee. May not this win and melt the heart of a Devil?

Christ freely offers himself to men, but doth not force men to him.

II. Upon what conditions may Christ be had?

II. *Quest.*

Answ. Make an exchange of what thou art or hast with Christ, for what Christ is or hath, and so taking him, (like the wise Merchant the *French*) thou shalt have salvation with him.

The conditions of coming to Christ. On what terms Christ may be had.

Now this exchange lieth in these four things chiefly.

1. We must give our selves to him.

First, give away thy self to him, *Head*, *Heart*, *Tongue*, *Body*, *Soul*, and he will give away himself unto thee, *Cant.* 6. 3. yea, he will stand in thy room in Heaven, that thou mayest triumph and say, I am already in Heaven, glorified in him; I see God's blessed face in *Christ*; I have conquered Death, Hell, and the Devil, in him.

2. We must give away all our sins.

Secondly, give away all thy *sins* to *Christ*, confess them, leave them, cast them upon the *Lord Jesus*, so as to receive power from him to forsake them; and he will be made sin for thee, to take them away from thee, 1 *John* 1. 9.

3. We must give away our Honour, Pleasure, Life it self, if he require it.

Thirdly, give away thine *Honour*, *Pleasure*, *Profit*, *Life*, for him; he will give away his crown and honour, life and all, to thee, *Luke* 18. Let nothing be sweet unto thee but *Him*, and nothing shall be sweet unto him but *Thee*.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, give away thy Rags, forſake thine own Righteouſneſs for him; he will give away all his Robes and Righteouſneſs to thee, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. Thou ſhalt ſtand as glorious in the ſight of God, howſoever thou art a poor ſnake in thy ſelf, as an Angel, nay, as all the Angels, becauſe cloathed with his Son *Chriſt Jeſus* his Righteouſneſs.

Christ out onely Redeemer.

4. We muſt give away all our own righteouſneſs.

Now tell me, will you have Chriſt? He is offered to you. Yes, you will all ſay: Yea, with all mine heart. But will you have him on theſe terms, upon theſe four conditions?

Now becauſe men will flatter themſelves, and ſay, Yes;

III. I will ſhew you four ſorts of people that reject *Chriſt* thus offered.

III. Four ſorts of people that reject Chriſt.

First, *The ſlighting Unbeliever*; that when he hears of an offer of *Chriſt*, and ſhould wonder at the love of the Lord in doing this, he makes nothing of it, but goes from the Church and ſayes, We muſt give Miniſters the wall in the Pulpit; and, Poor men they muſt have ſomewhat to ſay and preach for their living; There was a good plain Sermon to day; the man ſeems to mean well, but I think he be no great Scholar; And ſo makes no more of the offer of *Chriſt*, than of the offer of a ſtraw at their feet. If a good bargain be offered them, they will forget all their buſineſs to accompliſh that; yet they make light of this offer, *Mat.* 22. 5.

1. The ſlighter.

Secondly, *The deſperate Unbeliever*; that

2. The deſperate unbeliever.

Christ our onely Redeemer.

seeing his sins to be so great, and feeling his heart so hard, and finding but little good from God, since he sought for help, (like *Cain*) flieth from the presence of the Lord; like a mad Lion he breaks his chains of restraining grace, and runneth roaring after his prey, after his cups, queans, lusts, &c. and so will not honour Christ with such a great cure of such great sins, that he shall never have the credit of it, nor will be beholden to him for such a kindness.

3. The presumtuous unbeliever.

Thirdly, *The presumptuous Unbeliever*; that seeing what sins he hath committed, and it may be he having a little touch, and some sorrow for his sins, catcheth at Christ, hoping to be saved by him before ever he come to be loaden with sin as the greatest evil, or God's wrath kindled against him as his greatest curse; and so catching at Christ, hopes he hath Christ, and hoping he hath Christ already, shuts out Christ for the future, and so rejects him, *Micah* 3. 11. You shall have these men and women complain never of the want, but onely of the weakness of their faith; and they will not be beaten off from thence: let them hear never so much of their misery, nor see never so much of their sin, yet they will not be beaten off from trusting to Christ.

4. The tottering and doubtful unbeleiver.

Fourthly, *The tottering, doubtful Unbeliever*; one that is in a question whether he had best have Christ or no. He sees some good in Christ that he would gladly have him for; as, Then I shall have Heaven, and Pardon,

and

and Grace, and Peace: and yet he ſees many things he diſlikes with Chriſt; as namely, Then farewell merry Meetings, Paſtimes, Cards and Dice, Pleaſure and ſinful Games. And hence they totter this way and that way, not knowing whether they had beſt have Chriſt or no, *James* 1. 6,7. Theſe people reject *Jeſus Chriſt*. Chriſt our onely Redeemer.

IV. And now come and ſee the greatneſs of this ſin. IV. The great evil in rejecting Chriſt.

1. It's a moſt *bloody ſin*; it's a trampling under foot the blood of the Son of God, *Heb.* 10.21. 1. A bloudy ſin.

2. It's a moſt *diſhonouring ſin*: for as by the firſt act of Faith a man glorifieth God by obeying all the Law at an inſtant in Chriſt; ſo by rejecting him thou doſt break all thoſe Laws of God in an inſtant, and ſo doſt diſhonour him. 2. A diſhonouring ſin.

3. It's a moſt *ungrateful ſin*; it's a deſpiſing God's greateſt love, which the Lord takes moſt heavily. 3. An ungrateful ſin.

4. It's a moſt *inexcuſable ſin*; for what have you to caſt againſt *Jeſus Chriſt*? Oh, my ſins are ſo great, thou wilt ſay. But take *Chriſt*, his bloud will waſh thee from all thy ſins. 4. An inexcuſable ſin. *Object.* *Anſw.*

Oh, but my heart is hard, and my mind blind. *Object.*

Yea, but take me, and I will break thine heart, open thine eyes. A new heart is God's gift, and he hath promiſed to create it in us. *Anſw.*

Oh, but then I muſt forſake all my pleaſures. *Object.*

Christ our onely Redeemer.

Thou shalt have them fully, continually, infinitely in Christ.

Answ. Oh, but I cannot take Christ.

Object. Oh, but Christ can give thee an hand to receive him, as well as give away himself.

Answ.

5. An heavy sin.

5. It is a most *heavy sin.* What sin will gripe so in Hell as this? *John* 3. 19. God the Father shall strike the Devils for breaking the Law of the Creation; but God the Son shall strike thee, and the Comforter himself shall set himself against thee, for despising the means and offers of Redemption. The Devils might never have had mercy; but thou shalt think with anguish, and vexation, and madness of heart, I might have had a *Christ*, he was offered unto me; Mercy wooed this stubborn proud heart to yield, but, O Rock of Adamant that I was! it did not affect me. Oh flie speedily to this *City of refuge, lest the pursuer of blood overtake thee.*

Use 5.

Away then out of your selves to the Lord Jesus. Heaven and Earth leave thee, and have forsaken thee; now there is but one more that can do thee good, and deliver thy soul from endless sorrow; go to him, and take hold on him, not with the hand of presumption and love to thy self, to save thy self, but with the hand of faith, and love to him, to honour him.

An invitation on to take hold on Christ.

Object. I am well enough already; what tell you me of *Christ?*

Answ. This is the damning sin of these times: when men have Christ offered unto them, fore-

foretelling them else of wrath to come, they say they are well; hence feeling no judgement here, they fear no wrath hereafter; hence being well, they feel no need of Christ; hence till they die they never seek out for a *Saviour*. Men will not come into the Ark already made for them, before the Floud arise. The World makes so much of those it nurseth up, that they are unwilling to come to Heaven, when they are called to come home.

Christ our onely Redeemer.

Security a dangerous sin.

But it may be *Christ* hath not redeemed me, nor shed his bloud for me, therefore why should I go to him?

Object.

It may be it is true, it may be not; yet do thou venture, as those *Joel* 2. *Who knows but the Lord may return?* It is true, God hath elected but few, and so the Son hath shed his bloud and died but for a few; yet this is no excuse for thee to lie down and say, What should I seek out of my self for succour? Thou must in this case venture and try, as many men amongst us do now, who hearing of one good Living fallen, twenty of them will go and seek for it, although they know only one shall have it. Therefore say as those Lepers in *Samaria*, If I stay here in my sins, I die; if I go out to the Camp of the *Syrians*, we may live; we can but die however: If I go out to Christ, I may get mercy; however I can but die, and it is better to die at Christ's feet, than in mine own puddle. Content not your selves therefore with your bare reformation and amending your lives;

Answ.

To say that Christ hath not redeemed thee, is no excuse for not coming to Christ.

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

this is but to cross the debt in thine own book, it remaineth uncancelled in the Creditor's book still: but go, take, offer up this eternal sacrifice before the eyes of God the Father, and cry guilty at his Barr, and look for mercy from him; sigh under thy bondage, that as *Moses* was sent unto the *Israelites*, so may *Christ* be sent into thy soul. Rest not therefore in the sight or sense of a helpless condition, saying, I cannot help my self, unless Christ doth. Sigh unto the Lord Jesus in Heaven for succour, and admire the Lord for ever, that when there was no help, and when he might have raised out of the stones children to praise him, yet he should send his Son out of his bosom to save thee. So much for this Particular.

The fifth *Divine Principle* follows to be handled.

CHAP. V.

That those that are saved are very few; and that those that are saved are saved with very much difficulty.

The fifth Principle.

STreight is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it, Mat. 7. 14.

Here are two parts.

1. The paucity of them that shall be saved; *Few find the way thither.* 2. The

2. The difficulty of being ſaved; *Streight and narrow is the way and gate unto life.* Few are ſaved, and that with difficulty.

Hence ariſe two Doctrines,

1. That the number of them that ſhall be ſaved is very ſmall, *Luke* 13.24. The Devil hath his drove and *ſwarmes* to go to Hell, as faſt as Bees to their Hives: Chriſt hath his *flock*, and that is but *a little flock*. Hence God's children are called *Jewels*, *Mal.* 3.17. which commonly are kept ſecret in reſpect of the other lumber in the houſe: hence they are called *ſtrangers* and *pilgrims*, which are very few in reſpect of the inhabitants of the Countrey through which they paſs: hence they are called *ſons of God*, 1 *John* 3.2. *of the Blood Royal*, which are few in reſpect of common Subjects. *Doct.* 1. Luke 12.32.

But ſee the truth of this Point in theſe two things.

Firſt, look to all ages and times of the World; Secondly, to all places and perſons in the World; and we ſhall ſee few men were ſaved. Few ſaved in all ages.

1. Look to all ages, and we ſhall find but a handful ſaved. As ſoon as ever the Lord began to keep houſe, and there were but two families in it, there was a bloudy *Cain* living, and a good *Abel* ſlain. And as the World increaſed in number, ſo in wickedneſs, *Gen.* 6. 12. it is ſaid, *All fleſh had corrupted their ways*, and amongſt ſo many thouſand men not one righteous but *Noah*, and his family; and yet in the Ark there crept in a curſed *Cham*. As the world increaſed in number, ſo in wickedneſs.

Few are saved, and that with difficulty

Afterwards, as *Abraham*'s posterity increased, so we see their sin abounded. When his posterity was in *Ægypt*, where, one would think, if ever men were good, now it would appear, being so heavily afflicted by *Pharaoh*, being by so many miracles miraculously delivered by the hand of *Moses*, yet most of these *God was wroth with*, *Heb.* 3. 12. and only two of them, *Caleb* and *Joshua*, went into *Canaan*, a type of Heaven. Look into *Solomon*'s time: what glorious times? what great profession was there then? Yet after his death *ten Tribes* fell to the odious sin of Idolatry, following the command of *Jeroboam* their King. Look farther into *Isaiah*'s time, when there were multitudes of Sacrifices and Prayers, *Isa.* 1. 11. yet then there was but a *remnant*, nay, a very *little* remnant, that should be saved. And look to the time of Christ's coming in the flesh, (for I pick out the best time of all) when one would think by such Sermons he preached, such Miracles he wrought, such a Life as he led, all the *Jewes* would have entertained him; yet it is said, *He came unto his own, and they received him not.* So few, that Christ himself admires at one good *Nathaniel*, *Behold an Israelite in whom there is no guile.* In the Apostles time many indeed were converted, but few comparatively; and amongst the best Churches were many bad, as that at *Philippi*, *Philippians* 3. 18. Many had a name to live, but were dead, and *few* onely kept their garments unspotted. And presently after the Apostles time

Isai. 1. 9.

John 1. 12.

Rev. 3. 4.

time *Many grievous wolves came in and devoured the sheep*; and so in succeeding Ages, *Revel.* 12 9. *All the earth wondred at the whore in scarlet.*

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

And in *Luther's time*, when the light began to arise again, he saw so many carnal Gospellers, that he breaks out in one Sermon into these speeches; *God grant I may never live to see those bloudy dayes that are coming upon an ungodly world.* *Latimer* heard so much prophaneness in his time, that he thought verily Dooms-day was just at hand. And have not our ears heard censuring those in the *Palatinate*, where (as 'tis reported) many have fallen from the glorious Gospel to Popery, as fast as leaves fall in *Autumn?* Who would have thought there had lurked such hearts under such a shew of detesting Popery, as was among them before? And at Christ's coming *shall he find faith on the earth?*

Acts 20. 28, 29, 30. *Luther.* *Latimer.*

2. Let us look unto all places and persons, and see how few shall be saved. The World is now split into four parts, *Europe*, *Asia*, *Africa*, and *America*; and the three biggest parts are drowned in a deluge of prophaneness and superstition, they do not so much as profess Christ; you may see the sentence of death written on these mens foreheads, *Jer.* 10. *ult.* But let us look upon the best part of the World, and that is *Europe*; how few shall be saved there? First, the *Grecian* Church, howsoever now in these dayes their good Patriarch of *Constantinople* is about a general Reformation among them, and hath done

2. Few shall be saved in all places.

Jer. 10. *ult.* *Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not upon thy name, &c.*

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

done much good; yet are they for the present, and have been for the most part of them, without the saving means of knowledge. They content themselves with their old Superstitions, having little or no Preaching at all. And for the other parts, as *Italy*, *Spain*, *France*, *Germany*, for the most part they are Popish, and see the end of these men, 2 *Thess.* 2. 9, 10, 11, 12. And now amongst them that carry the badge of Honesty, I will not speak what mine ears have heard and my heart believes concerning other Churches; I will come unto our own Church of *England*, which is the most flourishing Church in the World: never had Church such Preachers, such means; yet have we not some Chappels and Churches stand as Dark-Lanterns without light, where people are lead with blind, or idle, or licentious Ministers, and so both fall into the ditch?

Few shall be saved in *England*.

Nay, even amongst them that have the means of grace, but few shall be saved. It may be sometimes amongst ninety nine in a Parish, Christ sends a Minister to call some *one* lost sheep among them, *Mat.* 13. Three grounds were bad where the seed was sown, and onely one ground good. It's a strange speech of *Chrysostom* in his fourth Sermon to the people of *Antioch*, where he was much beloved, and did much good; *How many do you think* (saith he) *shall be saved in this City? It will be an hard speech to you, but I will speak it; though here be so many thousands of you, yet there cannot be found an hundred that shall*

Luke 15. 24, 25.

Chrysostom thought in *Antioch* an hundred could not be saved.

be

be saved, and I doubt of them too: For what villany is there among youth? what sloth is in old men? and so he goes on. So say I: Never tell me we are baptized, and are Christians, and trust to Christ; let us but separate the Goats from the Sheep, and exclude none but such as the Scripture doth, and sets a cross upon their doors, with *Lord, have mercy upon them*, and we shall see onely few in the City shall be saved.

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

Those which the Scripture excludes from salvation.

1. Cast out all the *prophane people* among us, as Drunkards, Swearers, Whores, Liers, which the Scripture brands for black sheep, and condemns them in an hundred places.

1. The prophane.

2. Set by all *Civil men*, that are but Wolves chained up, tame Devils, Swine in a fair Medow, that pay all they owe, and doe no body any harm, yet doe none any great good, that plead for themselves and say, *Who can say black is mine eye?* These are righteous men, whom Christ never came to call; *For he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

2. The Civil men.

3. Cast by all *Hypocrites*, that, like stage-players, in the sight of others act the parts of Kings and honest men; when look upon them in their tiring-house, they are but base varlets.

3. The Hypocrites.

4. *Formal Professors* and *Carnal Gospellers*, that have a thing like *faith*, and like *sorrow*, and like *true repentance*, and like *good desires*; but yet they be but Pictures, they deceive others and themselves too, 2 *Tim.* 3 5.

4. The formal Professors.

Set

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

Set by these four sorts, how few then are to be saved, even among them that are hatcht in the bosome of the Church?

Use 1. Of Encouragement.

First, here then is a Use of *Encouragement*. Be not discouraged by the name of Singularity. What, do you think your self wiser than others? and shall none be saved but such as are so precise as Ministers prate? Are you wiser than others, that you think none shall go to Heaven but your self? I tell you, if you would be saved, you must be singular men, not out of *faction*, but out of *conscience*, *Acts* 24. 16.

Tit. 2. 14.

Use 2. Of Terror.

Secondly, here is matter of *terror* to all those that be of opinion that few shall be saved; and therefore when they are convinced of the danger of sin by the Word, they flie to this shelter, If I be damned, it will be wo to many more beside me then; as though most should not be damned. Oh yes, the most of them that live in the Church shall perish: and this made an *Hermite*, which *Theodoret* mentions, to live fifteen years in a Cell in a desolate Wilderness, with nothing but bread and water, and yet doubt after all his sorrow, whether he should be saved or no. Oh, God's wrath is heavy, which thou shalt one day bear.

Use 3. Of Exhortation to all confident people.

Thirdly, this ministreth *Exhortation* to all *confident people*, that think they believe, and say they doubt not but to be saved; and hence do not much fear death. Oh, learn hence to suspect and fear your estate, and fear it so much, that thou canst not be quiet

until

until thou haſt got ſome aſſurance thou ſhalt be ſaved. When Chriſt told his Diſciples that one of them ſhould betray him, they all ſaid, *Maſter, is it I?* But if he had ſaid eleven of them ſhould betray him, all except one, would they not all conclude, *Surely it is I?* If the Lord had ſaid, only *few* ſhall be damned, every man might fear, It may be it is I; but now he ſayes *moſt* ſhall, every man may cry out and ſay, *Surely it is I.* No humble heart, but is driven to and fro with many ſtinging fears this way; yet there is a generation of preſumptuous, brazen-fac'd, bold people, that confidently think of themſelves, as the *Jewes* of the *Phariſees*, (being ſo holy and ſtrict) that if God ſave but two in the World, they ſhall make one.

Few are ſaved and that with difficulty.

Preſumptuous men think of themſelves as the Jews did of the Phariſees.

The child of God indeed *is bold as a Lyon*; but he hath God's Spirit and Promiſe aſſuring him of his eternal welfare. But I ſpeak of divers that have no ſound ground to prove this Point, (which they pertinaciouſly defend) that they ſhall be ſaved. This confident humour rageth moſt of all in our old profeſſors at large, who think, That's a jeſt indeed, that having been of a good belief ſo long, that they now ſhould be ſo far behindhand as to begin the work, and lay the foundation anew. And not onely among theſe, but amongſt divers ſorts of people whom the Devil never troubles, becauſe he is ſure of them already, and therefore cries peace in their ears, whoſe *Conſciences* never trouble them, becauſe *that* hath ſhut its eyes: and hence

Conſcience rages moſt in profeſſors at large.

The Devil never troubles ſome men, becauſe he is ſure of them already.

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

hence they sleep, and sleeping dream that God is mercifull unto them, and will be so; yet never see they are deceived, until they awake with the flames of Hell about their ears: and the *world* troubles them not, they have their hearts desire here, because they are friends to it, and so enemies to God. And *Ministers* never trouble them, for they have none such as are fit for that work near them; or if they have, they can sit and sleep in the Church, and chuse whether they will believe him. And their friends never trouble them, because they are afraid to displease them. This one truth well pondered and thought on may damp thine heart, and make thy conscience flie in thy face, and say, *Thou art the man*; it may be there are better in Hell then thy self that art so confident; and therefore tell me what hast thou to say for thy self, that thou shalt be saved? In what thing hast thou gone beyond them that *think they are rich and want nothing, who yet are poor, blind, miserable, and naked?*

Friends never reprove some men, because of displeasing them.

Object. 1 Thou wilt say haply, first, I have left my sins I once lived in, and am now no drunkard, no swearer, no lier, *&c.*

Answ. I answer; thou mayest be washt from thy mire, (the pollution of the world) and yet be a swine in God's account, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. thou mayest live a blameless, innocent, honest, smooth life, and yet be a miserable creature still, *Phil.* 3. 6.

But I pray, and that often.

Object. 2. This thou mayest do, and yet never be saved,

Answ.

ved, *Isai.* 1.11. *To what purpose is your multitude of sacrifices?* Nay, thou mayest pray with much affection, with a good heart, as thou thinkest, yet be a thousand miles off from being saved, *Prov.* 1.28. Few are saved and that with difficulty.

But I fast sometimes, as well as pray. *Object.* 3.

So did the Scribes and Pharisees, even twice a week; which could not be publick, but private fasts. And yet this righteousness could never save them. *Answ.*

But I hear the Word of God, and like the best Preachers. *Object.* 4.

This thou mayest doe too, and yet never be saved. Nay, thou mayest so hear, as to receive much *joy* and comfort in hearing, nay, to believe and catch hold on Christ, and so say and think *he is thine*, and yet not be saved, as the stony ground did, *Matthew* 13. who heard the Word with *joy*, and for a *season believed*. *Answ.* Ezek. 33.31, 32.

I read the Scriptures often. *Object.* 5.

This you may doe too, and yet never be saved; as the Pharisees, who were so perfect in reading the Bible, that Christ needed but onely say, *It hath been said of old time*, for they knew the text and place well enough without intimation. *Answ.*

But I am grieved and am sorrowfull, and repent for my sins past. *Object.* 6.

Judas did thus, *Matth.* 27. 3. he repents himself with a legal repentance for fear of Hell, and with a natural sorrow for dealing so unkindly with Christ, in betraying not onely bloud, but innocent bloud. True humi- *Answ.*

liation

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

liation is ever accompanied with hearty reformation.

Oh, but I love good men, and their company.

Object. 7. So did the *five fooliſh Virgins* love the company, and (at the time of *extremity*) the very *oyl* and grace of the *wiſe*, yet they were locked out of the gates of mercy.

Anſw.

Object. 8. But God hath given me more *knowledge* than others, or than I my ſelf had once.

Anſw. This thou mayeſt have, and be able to teach

Rom. 2. 18. others, and think ſo of thy ſelf too, and yet never be ſaved.

Object. 9. But I keep the Lord's day ſtrictly.

Anſw. So did the Jewes, whom yet Chriſt condemned, and they were never ſaved.

Object. 10. I have very many good *deſires* and *endeavours* to get Heaven.

Anſw. Theſe thou and thouſands may have, and yet miſs of Heaven.

Luke 13. 24. Many ſhall ſeek to enter in at that narrow gate, and not be able.

Object. 11. True, thou wilt ſay, many men do many duties, but without any *life* or *zeal*; I am zealous.

Anſw. So thou mayeſt be, and yet never be ſa-

Phil. 3. 6, 11. ved, as *Jehu*. *Paul* was zealous when he was a Phariſee: and if he was ſo for a falſe Religion, and a bad cauſe, why, much more mayeſt thou be for a good cauſe; ſo zealous, as not only to cry out againſt profaneneſs in the wicked, but the civil honeſty of others, and hypocriſie of others, yea, even of the coldneſs of the beſt of God's people: thou mayeſt

mayest be the fore-horse in the Team, and the Ring-leader of good exercises amongst the best men, (as *Joash*, a wicked King, was the first that complained of the negligence of his best Officers in not repairing the Temple) and so stir them up unto it. Nay, thou mayest be so forward, as to be persecuted, and not yield an inch, nor shrink in the wetting, but mayest manfully and courageously stand it out in time of persecution, as the *thorny ground* did. So zealous thou mayest be, as to like best of, and to flock most unto, the most zealous Preachers, that search mens consciences best; as the whole Countrey of *Judea* came flocking to *John*'s Ministry, and delighted to hear him for a season: nay, thou mayest be so zealous as to take sweet delight in doing all these things; *Isai.* 58. 2, 3. *They delight in approaching near unto God*; yet come short of Heaven.

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

2 Chron. 24. 4, 5, 6.

But thou wilt say, True, many a man rides post, that breaks his neck at last; many a man is zealous, but his fire is soon quench'd, and his zeal is soon spent; they hold not out: whereas I am constant, and persevere in godly courses. *Object.* 12.

So did that young man, yet he was a graceless man, *Mat.* 19. 20. *All these things have I done from my youth*; what lack I yet? *Answ.*

It is true, Hypocrites may persevere, but they know themselves *to be naught* all the while, and so deceive others: but I am perswaded that I am in *God*'s favour, and in a safe and happy estate, since I do all with a good heart for God. *Object.* 13.

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

This thou mayest verily think of thy self, and yet be deceived, and damned, and go to the Devil at last. *There is a way* (saith *Solomon*) *that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof is the way of death.* For he is an Hypocrite not only that makes a seeming outward shew of what he hath not, but also that hath a true shew of what indeed there is not. The first sort of Hypocrites deceive others only; the latter having some inward, yet common, work, deceive themselves too. *Jam.* 1. 26. *If any man seems to be religious,* (so many are, and so deceive the World, but it is added) *deceiving his own soul.* Nay, thou mayest go so fairly, and live so honestly, that all the best Christians about thee may think well of thee, and never suspect thee; and so mayest pass through the World, and die with a deluded comfort, that thou shalt go to Heaven, and be canonized for a Saint in thy Funeral-Sermon, and never know thou art counterfeit, till the Lord brings thee to thy strict and last examination, and so thou receivest that dreadful sentence, *Go ye cursed.* Mat. 25. Such was with the *five foolish Virgins*, that were never discovered by the *wise*, nor by themselves, until the gate of grace was shut upon them. If thou hast therefore no better evidances to shew for thy self, that thine estate is good, than these, I'le not give a pin's point for all thy flattering false hopes of being saved: but it may be thou hast never yet come so far as to this pitch; and if not, Lord! what will become of thee? Suspect thy self much,

Answ. Prov. 14. 12.

Some Hypocrites deceive themselves, some deceive others.

The five foolish Virgins.

much, and when in this ſhipwrack of ſouls thou ſeeſt ſo many thouſands ſink, cry out and conclude, It's a wonder of wonders, and a thouſand and a thouſand to one, if ever thou comeſt ſafe to ſhore.

Few are ſaved, and that with difficulty.

Oh, ſtrive then to be one of them that ſhall be ſaved, though it coſt thee thy bloud, and the loſs of all that thou haſt, labour to go beyond all thoſe that go ſo far, and yet periſh at the laſt. Do not ſay, that ſeeing ſo few ſhall be ſaved, therefore this diſcourageth me from ſeeking, becauſe all my labour may be in vain. Conſider that Chriſt here makes another and a better uſe of it, *Luk.* 13. 24. Seeing that *many ſhall ſeek and not enter, therefore* (ſaith he) *ſtrive to enter in at the ſtraight gate*; venture at leaſt, and try what the Lord will do for thee.

Uſe 4. Strive to be ſaved.

Wherein doth the child of God (and ſo how may I) go beyond theſe Hypocrites that go ſo far?

Queſt.

In three things principally.

Anſw.

First, no unregenerate man, though he go never ſo far, let him do never ſo much, but he lives in ſome one ſin or other, ſecret or open, little or great. *Judas* went far, but he was covetous. *Herod* went far, but he loved his *Herodias*. Every Dog hath his kennel, every Swine hath his ſwill, and every wicked man his luſt: for no unregenerate man hath fruition of God to content him; and there is no man's heart but it muſt have ſome good to content it, which good is to be found only in the fountain of all good, and that is God;

Wherein a child of God goeth beyond an Hypocrite.

1. No unregenerate man but lives in ſome known ſin.

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

or in the Ciſtern, and that is in the Creatures: Hence a man having loſt full content in God, he ſeeks for, and feeds upon contentment in the creature, which he makes a God to him; and here lies his luſt or ſin, which he muſt needs live in. Hence, ask thoſe men that go very far, and take their peny for good Silver, and commend themſelves for their good deſires, I ſay, ask them if they have no ſin: Yes, ſay they, who can live without ſin? and ſo they give way to ſin, and therefore live in ſin. Nay, commonly all the Duties, Prayers, Care and Zeal of the beſt Hypocrites are to hide a luſt: as the Whore in the *Proverbs*, that wipes her mouth, and goes to the Temple, and pays her vows; or to feed a luſt; as *Jehu* his zeal againſt *Baal* was to get a Kingdom. There remains a root of bitterneſs in the beſt Hypocrites, which howſoever it be lopt off ſometimes by ſickneſs or horror of conſcience, and a man hath purpoſes never to commit it again, yet there it ſecretly lurks; and though it ſeemeth to be bound and conquered by the *Word*, or by *Prayer*, or by outward *Croſſes*, or while the hand of God is upon a man, yet the inward ſtrength and power of it remains ſtill: and therefore when temptations, like ſtrong *Philiſtins*, are upon this man again, he breaks all vows, promiſes, bonds of God, and will have the life of his ſin.

Hypocrites, like the Whore in *Proverbs*, or like *Jehu*, zealous againſt *Baal*, but for their own ends.

Secondly, No unregenerate man or woman ever came to be poor in ſpirit, and ſo to be carried out of all Duties unto Chriſt: if

2. Unregenerate men are not poor in Spirit.

it were poſſible for them to forſake and break looſe for ever from all ſin, yet here they ſtick as the Scribes and Phariſees; and ſo, like zealous *Paul* before his converſion, they faſted and prayed, and kept the Sabbath, but they reſted in their legal righteouſneſs, and in the performance of theſe and the like duties. Take the beſt Hypocrite that hath the moſt ſtrong perſwaſions of God's Love to him, and ask him why he hopes to be ſaved, he will anſwer, *I pray, read, hear, love good men*, cry out *of the ſins of the time.* And tell him again, that an Hypocrite may climb theſe ſtairs and go as far: he will reply, true indeed, but they do not what they do with a ſound heart but to be ſeen of men. Mark now, how theſe men feel a good heart in themſelves, and in all things they do, and therefore feel not a want of all good, which is poverty of ſpirit; and therefore here they fall ſhort, *Iſai.* 66. 2. There were divers Hypocrites forward for the worſhip of God in the Temple; but God loaths theſe, becauſe not poor in ſpirit, to whom only it is ſaid the Lord will look. I have ſeen many profeſſors very forward for all good duties, but as ignorant of Chriſt, when they are ſifted, as blocks. And if a man (as few do) know not Chriſt, he muſt reſt in his duties, becauſe he knows not Chriſt, to whom he muſt go and be carried if ever he be ſaved. I have heard of a man that, being condemned to die, thought to eſcape the Gallows, and to ſave himſelf from hanging, by a certain

Few are ſaved, and that with difficulty.

God looks on the poor in ſpirit.

Few are saved and that with difficulty.

gift he said he had of whistling; some men seek to save themselves by their gifts of *knowledge*, gifts of *memory*, gifts of *prayer*, when they see they must die for their sins. This is the ruine of many a soul, that though he forsake *Egypt*, and his sins and flesh-pots there, and will never be so as he hath been; yet he never cometh into *Canaan*, but loseth himself and his soul in a wilderness of many *duties*, and there perisheth.

3. Unregenerate men never take their rest in Christ only.

Thirdly, if any unregenerate man come unto *Christ*, he never gets into *Christ*, that is, never takes his *eternal rest*, and *lodging* in *Jesus Christ* only, Heb. 4. 4. *Judas* followed *Christ for the Bag*, he would have the *Bag* and *Christ* too. The young man came unto Christ to be his Disciple, but he would have *Christ* and the *world* too. They will not content themselves with Christ alone, nor with the World alone, but make their markets out of both, like whorish wives, that will please their husbands and others too. Men in distress of conscience, if they have comfort from Christ, they are contented; if they have salvation from Hell by Christ, they are contented; but Christ himself contents them not. Thus far an hypocrite goes not. So much for the first Doctrine observed out of the Text. I come now to the second.

Doct. 2. Salvation difficult.

Doct. 2. *That those that are saved are saved with much difficulty*: or, *it is a wonderful hard thing to be saved.*

The gate is straight, and therefore a man must sweat and strive to enter; both the entrance

trance is difficult, and the progress of salvation too. *Jesus Christ* is not got with a wet finger. It is not wishing and desiring to be saved will bring men to Heaven; Hell's mouth is full of *good wishes*. It is not shedding a tear at a Sermon, or blubbering now and then in a corner, and saying over thy prayers, and crying God mercy for thy sins, will save thee. It is not, *Lord, have mercy upon us*, will do thee good. It is not coming constantly to Church. These are easie matters. But it is a tough work, a wonderfull hard matter to be saved, 1 *Pet.* 4. 18. Hence the way to Heaven is compared to a *Race*, where a man must put forth all his strength, and stretch every limb, and all to get forward. Hence a Christian's life is compared to *wrestling*, *Ephes.* 6. 12. All the policy and power of Hell buckle together against a Christian; therefore he must look to himself, or else he falls. Hence it is compared to *fighting*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. A man must fight against the *Devil*, the *World*, *Himself*, who shoot poisoned bullets into the soul, where a man must kill or be killed. God hath not lined the way to Heaven with Velvet, nor strewed it with Rushes. He will never feed a sloathful humour in men, who will be saved if Christ and Heaven will drop into their mouths, and if any would bear their charges thither: If *Christ* might be bought for a few cold wishes and lazy desires, he would be of small reckoning amongst men, who would say, *lightly come, lightly go*. Indeed Christ spoke it safe

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

Salvation compared to fighting.

Few are saved and that with difficulty.

in it self, and when a man is got into Christ, nothing is so sweet; but for a carnal dull heart, it is hard to draw in it: for,

Four streight Gates to be past through before we can enter into Heaven.

There are four streight gates which every one must pass through before he can enter into Heaven.

1. The streight gate of Humiliation.

1. There is the streight gate of *Humiliation*: God saveth none, but first he humbleth them. Now it is hard to pass through the gates and flames of Hell: for a heart as stiff as a stake to bow; as hard as a stone, to bleed for the least prick, not to mourn for one sin, but all sins, and not for a fit, but all a man's life-time. Oh, it is hard for a man to suffer himself to be loaden with sin, and prest to death for sin, so as never to love sin more, but to spit in the face of that which he once loved as dearly as his life. It is easie to drop a tear or two, and be Sermon-sick: but to have a heart rent *for* sin and *from* sin, this is true humiliation, and this is hard.

2. The streight gate of Faith.

2. The streight gate of *Faith*, *Ephes.* 1. 19. It's an easie matter to presume, but hard to believe in Christ. It is easie for a man that was never humbled to believe and say, *'Tis but believing*; but it is an hard matter for a man humbled, when he sees all his sins in order before him, the *Devil*, and *Conscience* roaring upon him, and crying out against him, and God frowning upon him, now to call God *Father*, is an hard work. *Judas* had rather be hang'd than believe. It is hard to see Christ as a Rock to stand upon, when we are over-

overwhelmed with sorrow of heart for sin. It is hard to prize Christ above ten thousand worlds of Pearl: 'tis hard to desire Christ, and nothing but Christ; hard to follow Christ all the day long, and never to be quiet till he is got in thine arms, and then with *Simeon* to say, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.* Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

3. The streight gate of *Repentance.* It is an easie matter for a man to confess himself to be a sinner, and to cry God forgiveness until next time: but to have a bitter sorrow, and so to turn from all sin, and to return to God, and all the wayes of God, which is true repentance indeed; this is hard. 3. The streight gate of Repentance.

4. The streight gate of *Opposition of Devils, the World,* and a man's own *Self,* who knock a man down when he begins to look towards Christ and Heaven. 4. Streight gate of Opposition.

Hence learn, That every easie way to Heaven is a false way, although Ministers should preach it out of their Pulpits, and Angels should publish it out of Heaven. *Use* Of Instruction.

Now there are nine easie ways to Heaven, (as men think) all which lead to Hell. Nine false ways to salvation discovered.

1. The common *broad way,* wherein a whole Parish may all go a-breadth. Tell these people they shall be damned; their answer is, Then wo to many more besides me. 1. The broad way.

2. The way of *civil Education,* whereby many wilde natures are by little and little tamed, and like Wolves are chained up easily while they are young. 2. The way of civil education.

3. *Balaam's* way of *good wishes,* whereby many 3. The way of good wishes.

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

many people will confess their ignorance, forgetfulness, and that they cannot make such shews as others do: but they thank God their hearts are as good, and God for his part accepts (say they) the will for the deed; and, *My son, give me thy heart*; the heart is all in all, and so long they hope to do well enough. Poor deluded creatures thus think to break through armies of *sins, devils, temptations*, and to break open the very gates of Heaven with a few good wishes; they think to come to their journeys end without legs, because their hearts are good to God.

4. The way of formality.

4. The way of *Formality*, whereby men rest in the *performance* of most or of all *external duties* without inward life, *Mark* 1. 14. Every man must have some *Religion*, some fig-leaves to hide their nakedness. Now this Religion must be either true Religion, or the false one. If the true, he must either take up the power of it, but that he will not, because it is burthensome; or the *form* of it, and this being easie, men embrace it as their God, and will rather lose their lives than their Religion thus taken up. This form of Religion is the easiest Religion in the World; partly, because it easeth men of trouble of conscience, quieting that: Thou hast sinned, saith Conscience, and God is offended; take a book and pray, keep thy conscience better, and bring thy Bible with thee: now conscience is silent, being charmed down with the form of Religion, as the Devil is driven away

The conscience of unregenerate men is often silenced with a form of Religion.

way (as they say) with Holy water: Partly also, because the form of Religion credits a man: Partly, because it is easie in it self; it's of a light carriage, being but the shadow and picture of the substance of Religion. As now, what an easie matter is it to come to Church? they hear (at least outwardly) very attentively an hour and more, and then to turn to a Proof, and to turn down a leaf; here's the form: but now to spend Saturday-night, and all the whole Sabbath-day morning, in trimming the Lamp, and in getting oyl in the heart, to meet the Bridegroom the next day, and so meet him in the Word, and there to tremble at the voice of God, and suck the breast while it is open; and when the Word is done, to go aside privately, and there to chew upon the Word, there to lament with tears all the vain thoughts in Duties, and deadness in *hearing*, this is hard, because this is the power of godliness, and this men will not take up. So for private *prayer*: what an easie matter is it for a man to say over a few prayers out of some *devout book*, or to repeat some old prayer got by heart since a child, or to have two or three short-winded wishes for God's mercy in the morning and at night? this form is easie: But now to prepare the heart by serious meditation of God and man's self before he prays, then to come to God with a bleeding hunger-starv'd heart, not only with a desire, but with a Warrant, I must have such or such a mercy, and there to wrestle with God,

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

Book-prayer not the power of godliness.

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

God, although it be an hour or two together, for a blessing; this is too hard; men think none do thus, and therefore they will not.

5. The way of presumtion.

Fifthly, the way of *Presumption*, whereby men, having seen their sins, catch hold easily upon God's mercy, and snatch comforts before they are reached out unto them. There is no word of comfort in the Book of God intended for such as *regard iniquity in their hearts*, though they do not act it in their lives. Their only comfort is, that the sentence of damnation is not yet executed upon them.

6. The way of sloth.

Sixthly, The way of *Sloth*, whereby men lie still, and say God must do all. If the Lord would set up a Pulpit at the Ale-house door, it may be they would hear oftner. If God will always thunder, they will always pray; if strike them now and then with sickness, God shall be paid with good words and promises enough, that they will be better if they live: but as long as peace lasts, they will run to Hell as fast as they can; and if God will not catch them, they care not, they will not return.

7. The way of carelesness.

Seventhly, The way of *Carelesness*, when men feeling many difficulties, pass through some of them, but not all, and what they cannot get *now*, they feed themselves with a false hope they shall *hereafter*. They are content to be called Precisians, and fools, and crazy brains; but they want brokenness of heart; and they will pray (it may be) for it, and

pass

pass by that difficulty; but to keep the wound always open, this they will not do; to be always sighing for help, and never to give themselves rest till their hearts are humbled, that they will not. *These have a name to live, yet are dead.*

Few are saved, and that with difficulty.

Eighthly, The way of *Moderation*, or honest discretion; *Rev.* 3. 16. which indeed is nothing but luke-warmness of the soul; and that is, when a man contrives and cuts out such a way to Heaven, as he may be hated of none, but please all, and so do any thing for a quiet life, and so sleep in a whole skin. The Lord saith, *He that will live godly must suffer persecution.* No, not so, Lord. Surely (think they) if men were discreet and wise, it would prevent a great deal of trouble and opposition in good courses. This man will commend those that are most zealous, if they were but wise: if he meet with a black-mouth'd swearer, he will not reprove him, lest he be displeased with him; if he meet with an honest man, hee'l yield to all he saith, that so he may commend him; and when he meets them both together, they shall be both alike welcome, (what-ever he thinks) to his house and table, because he would fain be at peace with all men.

8. The way of moderation.

Ninthly, and lastly, the way of *Self-love*, whereby a man fearing terribly he shall be damned, useth diligently all means whereby he shall be saved. Here is the strongest difficulty of all, to row against the stream, and to

9. The way of self-love. The end of the fifth Principle.

Man's perdition is of himself.

to hate a man's self, and then to follow Christ fully.

I come now to the sixth general Head proposed in order to be considered.

CHAP. VI.

The sixth Principle.

That the grand cause of man's eternal ruine, or why so many are damned, and so few saved by Christ, is from themselves.

WHY *will you die?* Ezek. 33. 11. The great cause why so many people die, and perish everlastingly, is because they *will*: every man that perisheth is his own Butcher, or murtherer, *Mat.* 22. 27. *Hos.* 9. This is the point we purpose to prosecute at present.

Quest. The question here will be, how men plot and perfect their own ruine.

Answ. By these four principal means, which are the four great rocks that most men are split upon; and great necessity lieth upon every man to know them; for when a powder-plot is discovered, the danger is almost past: I say, there are these four causes of man's eternal overthrow, which I shall handle largely, and make Use of every particular Reason when it is opened and finished.

How men plot their own ruine.

1. By ignorance.

First, by reason of that bloudy black *Ignorance* of men, whereby thousands remain wofully

wofully ignorant of their ſpiritual eſtate, not knowing how the caſe ſtands between God and their ſouls; but thinking themſelves to be well enough already, they never ſeek to come out of their miſery, till they periſh in it.

Man's perdition is of himſelf.

Secondly, by reaſon of man's *carnal Security*, putting the evil day far from them, whereby they feel not their fearful thraldome, and ſo never groan to come out of the ſlaviſh bondage of Sin and Satan.

2. By carnal ſecurity.

Thirdly, by reaſon of man's *carnal Confidence*, whereby they ſhift to ſave themſelves by their own duties and performances, when they feel it.

3. By carnal confidence.

Fourthly, by reaſon of man's bold *Preſumption*, whereby men ſcramble to ſave themſelves by their own ſeeming faith, when they ſee an inſufficiency in duties, and an unworthineſs in themſelves for God to ſave them.

4. By preſumption.

I will begin with the firſt Reaſon, and diſcover the firſt train whereby men blow up themſelves, which is this: They know not their miſery, nor that fearful accurſed forlorn eſtate wherein they lie, but think and ſay they ſhall do as well as others: and therefore when any friend perſwadeth them to come out of it, and ſhews them the danger of remaining in ſuch a condition; what is their anſwer? *I pray you ſave your breath to cool your broth. Every Fat ſhall ſtand on his own bottom. Let me alone: I hope I have a ſoul to ſave as well as you, and ſhall be as careful*

I.

Ignorance the firſt general Reaſon of man's ruine.

Man's perdition is of himself.

full of it as you shall or can be: You shall not answer for my soul. I hope I shall do as well as the preciſeſt of you all. Hence likewiſe, if the Miniſter come home to them, they go home with hearts full of out-cries againſt the man, and their tongue dipt in Gall againſt the Sermon. God be merciful unto us, if all this be true. Here's harſh Doctrine, enough to make a man run out of his wits, and to drive me to deſpair. Thus they know not their miſery, and not knowing (they are loſt and condemned creatures under the everlaſting wrath of God) they never *ſeek, pray, ſtrive,* or follow the means whereby they may come out of it, and ſo periſh in it, and never know it, till they awake with the flames of Hell about their ears. They will acknowledge indeed, many of them, that all men are born in a moſt miſerable eſtate; but they never apply particularly that general truth to themſelves, ſaying, *I am the man,* I am *now* under God's wrath, and may be ſnatcht away by death *every hour,* and then I am undone and loſt for ever.

Many men are ſo ſecure, they are not ſenſible of their ſins, till they feel the flames of Hell about their ears.

Now there are two ſorts of people that are ignorant of this their miſery.

1. Prophane.

Firſt, the common ſort of prophane, blockiſh, ignorant people.

2. Unſound.

Secondly, the finer ſort of unſound hollow Profeſſors, that have a Peacock's pride, that think themſelves fair, and in a very good eſtate, though they have but one feather on their creſt to boaſt of.

The firſt ſort.

I will begin with the firſt ſort, and ſhew you

you the reasons why they are ignorant of their misery; that is, for these four reasons.

Man's perdition is of himself.

First, sometimes because they want the saving means of knowledge. There's no faithful Minister, no compassionate *Lot*, to tell them of fire and brimstone from Heaven for their crying sins; there's no *Noah* to forewarn them of the Floud; there's no Messenger to bring them tidings of those armies of God's devouring Plagues and Wrath that are approaching near unto them; they have no Pilot, poor forsaken creatures! to shew them their Rock. They have either no Minister at all to teach them: or, because the Parish is too poor, or the Church-living too great to maintain a faithful man; (the strongest Asses carrying the greatest burthens commonly) oh, woful Physicians. Sometimes they be prophane, and cannot heal themselves; and sometimes they be ignorant, and know not what to preach, unless they should follow the steps of Mr. *Latimer's* Frier; or at the best they shoot off a few Pot-guns against gross sins: or if they do shew men their misery, they lick them whole again with some comfortable ill-applied sentences, (But I hope better things of you, my Brethren,) the man's Patron may haply storm else: or else they say commonly, Thou hast sinned, comfort thy self, but despair not, Christ hath suffered; and thus skin over the wound, and let it fester within for want of cutting it deeper. I say therefore, because they want a faithful watch-man to cry *Fire*, *Fire*, in that

Reason 1. Many men want the saving means of knowledge.

Many perish for want of faithful Ministers.

I sleepy

Man's perdition is of himself.

sleepy estate of sin and darkness wherein they lie, therefore whole Towns, Parishes, Generations of men are burnt up, and perish miserably, *Lam.* 2. 14.

Reason 2. Wicked men never consider their miseries.

Secondly, because they have no leisure to consider of their misery, when they have the means of revealing it unto them, as *Felix*, *Acts* 24. 25. Many a man hath many a bitter Pill given him at a Sermon, but he hath no leisure to chew upon it. One man is taken up with Suits in Law, and another almost eaten up with Suretiship, and carking cares how to pay his debts, and provide for his own; another hath a great charge and few friends, and he saith the World is hard, and hence (like a Mole) roots in the earth week-days and Sabbath-days: the World thus calling them on one side, and lust on another, and the Devil on the other side, they have no leisure to consider of *Death*, *Devil*, *God*, nor *themselves*, *Hell*, nor *Heaven*. The Minister cries and knocks without; but there is such a noise and lumber of tumultuous lusts and vain thoughts in their hearts and heads, that all good thoughts are sad, unwelcom guests, and are knock'd down presently.

Many men so taken up with the cares of the World, they never think of death, God, nor themselves.

Reason 3. Wicked men are afraid to know their miseries.

Thirdly, because, if they have leisure, they are afraid to know it. Hence people cry out of Ministers, that they damn all, and will hear them no more, and they will not be such fools as to believe all that such say: the reason is, they are afraid to know the worst of themselves; they are afraid to be

cut,

cut, and therefore cannot endure the Chirurgion: they think, to be troubled in mind, as others are, is the very high road to despair; and therefore if they do hear a tale, how one after hearing of a Sermon grew distracted, or drown'd, or hang'd himself, it shall be an *item* and a warning to them as long as they live, for troubling their hearts about such matters. Men of guilty consciences (hence) flie from the grace of God, as Prisoners from the Judge, as Debtors from the Creditor. But if the Lord of Hosts can catch you, you must and shall feel with horror of heart that which you fear a little now.

Man's perdition is of himself.

Fourthly, because if they be free from this foolish fear, they cannot see their misery, by reason that they look upon their estates through false glasses, and by virtue of many false Principles in their minds they cheat themselves.

Reason 4. Wicked men cannot see their misery, because they look on it in false glasses.

Which false Principles are these principally: I will but name them.

First, they conceive, God that made them will not be so cruel as to damn them. 1.

Secondly, because they feel no misery, (but are very well) therefore they fear none. 2.

Thirdly, because God blesseth them in their outward Estates, in their Corn, Children, Calling, Friends, &c. would God bless them so, if he did not love them? 3.

Fourthly, because they think sin to be no great 4.

Man's perdition is of himself.

great evil; for all are sinners, so this cannot mischief them.

5. Fifthly, because they think God's mercy is above all his works: though sin be vile, yet conceiving God to be all mercy, all honey, and no justice, they think they are well.

6. Sixthly, because they think Christ died for all sinners, and they confess themselves to be great ones.

7. Seventhly, because they hope well, and so think to have well.

8. Eighthly, because they doe as most doe, who never crying out of their sins while they lived, and dying like lambs at last, they doubt not for their parts, but doing as such doe, they shall die happily, as others have done.

9. Ninthly, because their desires and hearts are good, as they think.

10. Tenthly, because they doe as well as God will give them grace; and so God is in the fault onely, if they perish.

These are the reasons and grounds upon which profane people are deceived.

Now it followeth to shew the grounds on which the finer sort miscarry.

The 2d. sort. Hollow professors deceive their own souls.

Secondly, Hollow Professors cheat and cozen their own souls. It is in our Church as it is in an old Wood, where there are many tall Trees, yet cut them and search them deeply, they prove pithless, sapless, hollow, unsound creatures. These men twist their own ruine with a finer thred, and can juggle better than the common sort, and cast mists before their own eyes, and so cheat their own

souls.

souls. It's a Minister's first work to turn men from darkness into this light, *Acts* 26.18. and the Spirit's first work to convince men of sin, *John* 16.9. And therefore it's peoples main work to know the worst at first of themselves.

Man's perdition is of himself.

How men come to be deceived about their spiritual estates.

Now the cause of these mens mistaking is three-fold.

1. Understanding.

First, the spiritual madness and drunkenness of their *Understanding*.

2. Conscience.

Secondly, the false bastard peace begot and nourished in the *Conscience*,

3. Will.

Thirdly, the slie and secret distempers of the *will*.

Seven distempers in the mind of man.

First, there are these 7. drunken distempers in the understanding or mind of man, whereby he cometh to be most miserably deceived.

1. Arrogancy.

First, the Understanding's *Arrogancy*. You shall never see a man mean and vile in his owne eyes, deceived, *Psalm* 25.9. but a proud man or woman is often cheated. Hence proud *Haman* thought surely he was the man *whom the King would honour*, when in truth it was intended for poor *Mordecai*. For, pride having once over-spread the mind, it ever hath this property, it makes a peny stand for a pound, a spark is blown up to a flame, it makes a great matter of a little *seeming grace*: and therefore the proud *Pharisee*, when he came to reckon with himself, he takes his poor Counter, that is, *I am not as other men, nor as this Publican*, and sets it down for 1000*l.* that is, he esteems of himself as a very

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Arrogant men are like the proud Pharisee, *I am not as other men.*

very rich man for it. So many a man, because he hath some good thing in himself, as, he is pitiful to the poor, he is a true man though a poor man, he was never given to Wine or Women; he magnifieth himself for this little, and so deceives and over-reckons himself. There are our *Bristow*-stones like Diamonds, and many cheaters cozen Cuntrey-folks with them, that desire to be fine, and know not what Diamonds are: So many men are desirous to be honest, and to be reputed so, not knowing what true grace means; therefore *Bristow*-stones are pearls in their eyes. A little seeming grace shines so bright in their eyes, that they are half bewitched by it, to think highly of themselves, although they be but glittering, seeming Jewels in a Swine's snout. A cab of Doves-dung was sold in *Samaria's* time of famine at a great rate: a man living in such a place where all about him are either *ignorant*, or *profane*, or *civil*, a little moral honesty (dung in respect of true grace) goes a great way, and is esteemed highly of, and he is as honest a man as ever lived. To a man that looks through a red glass all things appear red; so a man looking upon himself through some fair spectacles, through some one good thing which he hath in himself, appears fair to himself. It is said, *Luke* 20. *ult. The Pharisees devoured widows houses.* Might not this racking of rents make them question their estates? No. Why? They for pretence made *long prayers*. So many men are drunk now and then, but they are sorry;

sorry; they cannot but sin, but their desires are good; they talk idly, but they live honestly; they do ill sometimes, but they mean well. Thus when some good things are seen in themselves, pride puffs them up with an overweening conceit of it, and so they cozen their souls.

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Secondly, the understanding's *Obstinacy*; whereby the mind having been long rooted in this opinion, that *I am in a good estate*, will not suffer this conceit to be pluckt out of it. Now your old rooted, yet rotten, Professors, having grown long in a good conceit of themselves, will not believe that they have been fools all their life-time, and therefore now must pull down and lay the foundation again: and hence you shall have many say of a faithfull Minister, that doth convince and condemn them and their estate to be most wofull, What shall such an upstart teach me? doth he think to make me dance after his pipe, and to think that all my good *prayers*, my *faith*, my *charity*, have been so long abominable and vile before God? No silver can bribe a man to cast away his old traditional opinions and conceits, whereby he cheats himself, till Christ's bloud do it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. And hence the woman of *Samaria* objected this against Jesus Christ, that their old *Fathers worshipped in that mountain*, and therefore it was as good a place as *Jerusalem*, the place of God's true worship, *John* 4. 20. Men grow crooked and aged with good opinions of themselves, and can seldom or never be set streight again.

2. Obstinacy.

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When men grow aged with good opinion of themselves, they are hard to be reduced.

Hence such kind of people, though they would fain be taken for honest religious Christians, yet will never suspect their estates to be bad themselves, neither can they endure that any other should search or suspect them to be yet rotten at the heart: and are not those wares and commodities much to be suspected, nay concluded to be stark naught, which the seller will needs put upon the chapman without seeing or looking on them first? It's a strong argument we produce against the Papists Religion to be suspected to be bad, because they obtrude their Opinions on their followers to be believed without any hesitation or dispute about them, either before or after they have embraced them. Certainly thy old *faith*, thy old *prayers*, thy old *honesty* or form of piety are counterfeit wares, that cannot endure searching; because thou wilt not be driven from this conceit, *I am in a good estate, I have bin so long of this good mind, and therefore will not begin to doubt now.*

Obstinate men conceit themselves in a good estate.

It's to be feared that such kind of people, as I have much observed, are either notoriously ignorant, or have some time or other fallen into some horrible, secret, grievous sins, as *whoredom, oppression*, or the like, the guilt of which lying yet secretly on them, makes them flie from the light of *God's truth*, which should find them out, quarrelling both against it and the Ministers that preach it, *Rom.* 2. 8. And therefore as it is with thieves, when they have any stollen goods brought within doors, they will not be searched or suspected, but

but say, they are as honest men as themselves that came to search; for they fear, if they be found out, that they shall be troubled before the Judge, and may hardly escape with their lives: so many old Professors, when the Minister comes to search them, they clap to the doors upon the *man* and *truth* too, and say, *They hope to be saved as well as the best of them all*: the reason is, they are guilty, they are loth to be troubled and cast down by seeing the worst of themselves, and think it's hard for them to go to Heaven and be saved, if they have been in a wrong way all their life-time. An honest heart will cry after the best means, *Lord, search me, John* 3.20. and open all the doors to the entertainment of the streightest, strictest truths.

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Thirdly, the Understanding's *Obscurity*, or *ignorance* of the infinite exactness, glorious purity, and absolute perfection of the Law of God; whence it cometh to pass that, the burning Lamp or bright Sun of God's Law being set and obscured in their minds, rotten glow-worms of their own righteousness, doing some things according to the Law of God, shine and glister gloriously in their eyes in the dark night-time of dismal darkness, by doing of which they think to *please God*, and their *estate is very good*. *I was alive*, saith *Paul*, *Rom.*7.9. *without the law*; and he gives the reason of it, because sin did but sleep in him, like a cut-throat in an house where all is quiet. Before the Law came, he saw not that deadly secret score of corruption, and that

3. Obscurity.

litter

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litter of rebellion that was lurking in his heart, and therefore thought highly of himself for his own *righteousness*. The *Gospel* is a *glass* to shew men *the face of God in Christ*, 2 *Cor.* 2. *ult.* The Law is that *glass* that sheweth a man *his own face*, and what he himself is. Now if this *glass* be taken away, and not set before a deformed heart, how can a man but think himself fair? And this is the reason why Civil men, Formalists, almost every one, think better of themselves then indeed they are, because they reckon without their host; that is, they judge of the number, nature and greatness of their sins, by their own books, by their own reason; they look not *God's debt-book*, *God's exact Laws* over, and compare themselvs therewith; if they did, it would amaze the stoutest heart, and pluck down mens plumes, and make them say, *Is there any mercy so great as to pass by such sins, and to put up such wrongs, and to forgive such sins and debts, one of which alone may undoe me, much more so many?*

God's law a fit glass for men to see their own misery in.

4. Security of man's understanding a hinderance that men never see themselves.

Fourthly, the Understanding's *Securitie* or *sleepiness*, whereby men never reflect upon their own actions, nor compare them with the Rule; although they have knowledge of the Law of God, yet it is with them as it is with men that have a fair glass before them, but never beholding themselves in the glass, they never see their spots. This is the wo of most *unregenerate men*; they want a reflecting power and light to judge of themselves by, *Jer.* 8. 6. You shall have them think on a

Ser-

Sermon, Here's for such a one, and such a one is touched here; when it may be the same Sermon principally speaks of them: but they never say, *This concerneth me; I was found out through the goodness of the Lord to day; and surely the man spake unto none but unto me, as if some body had told him what I have done.* And hence you shall find out many lame Christians, that will yield to all the truths delivered in a Sermon, and commend it too, but go away and shake off all truths that serve to convince them. And hence many men, when they examine themselves in general, whether they have grace or no, whether they love *Christ* or no, they think, yes that they do with all their hearts; yet they neither have this grace or any other, what-ever they think, because they want *a reflecting light to judge of generals by their own particular courses.* For tell these men that he that loves another truly will often think of him, speak of him, rejoyce in his company, will not wrong him willingly in the least thing: now ask them if they *love Christ* thus; if they have any *reflecting light*, they will see, where they have one thought of *Christ*, they have a thousand of other things. *Rejoyce?* nay, they are weary of his company in Word, in Prayer. And that they do not onely *wrong him*, but make a light matter of it when it is done; All are sinners, and no man can live without sin. Like a sleepy man (fire burning in his bed-straw) he cries not out, when others haply lament his estate, that see afar off,

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Men are apt to shake off those truths that serve to convince them.

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Isa.42.25. Therefore he hath powred upon him the fury of his anger: &c.

off, but cannot help him, *Isai.42.25.* A man that is to be hang'd the next day, may dream over night he shall be a King: why? because he is asleep, *he reflects not on himself.* Thus thou maist go to the Devil, and be damned, and yet ever think and dream *that all is well with thee,* Thou hast no *reflecting light to judge thy self.* Pray therefore that the Lord would turn your eyes inward, and do not let the Devil and delusion shut you out of your own house, from seeing what court is kept there every day.

5. Impiety of the understanding is a lessening the grace of God.

Fifthly, the Understanding's *Impiety,* whereby it lessens and vilifies the glorious *grace of God* in another: whence it comes to pass, that this deluded soul seeing none much better than himself, concludes, If any be saved, I shall no doubt be one, *Isa.* 26.10,11. Men will not behold the Majesty of *God* in the lives of his *people.* Many a man being too light, yet desirous to go and pass for currant, weighs himself with the *best people,* and thinks, what have they that I have not? what do they that I do not? And if he sees they go beyond him, then he turns his own balance with his finger, and makes them too light, that so *he himself* may pass for weight.

Wicked men vilifie God's people.

And this vilifying of them and their grace, judging them to be of no other metall than other men, appears in three particulars.

1. By raising false reports upon God's people.

First, they raise up false reports of God's people, and nourish a kennel of evil suspicions of them: If they know any sin committed by them, they will conclude, *They be all such:*

such: if they see no offensive sin in any of them, they are then reputed *a pack of Hypocrites*: if they are not so uncharitable, (having no grounds) they prophesie they will *hereafter* be as bad as others, though they carry a fair flourish now.

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Secondly, if they judge well of them, then they compare themselves to them, by taking a scantling onely of their outside, and by what they see in them; and so, like children, seeing stars a great way off, think them no bigger nor brighter than winking Candles. They stand afar off from seeing the inside of a child of God, they see not *the glory of God filling that Temple*, they see not the sweet influence they receive from Heaven, and that fellowship they have with their God; and hence they judge but meanly of them, because the outside of a Christian is the worst part of him, and his glory shines chiefly within.

2. By comparing God's people with themselves.

Thirdly, if they see God's people do excell them, that they have better lives, better hearts, and better knowledge, yet they will not conclude that *they have no grace*, because it hath not that stamp that honest mens money hath: but this prank they play, they think such and such good men have a greater measure and a higher degree of grace than themselves, yet they dare be bold to think and say, *Their hearts are as upright, though they be not so perfect as others are*; and so vilifie the grace that shines in the best men; by making this gold to differ from their own copper, not essentially, but gradually; and hence they

3. They think themselves as upright, though not so perfect, as they.

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they deceive themselves miserably: not but that one (*star* or) sincere Christian differs from another in glory. I speak of those men onely, that never were fixt in so high a Sphere as true honesty dwells in, yet falsly father this bad conclusion, that they are upright for their measure, though they have not the like measure of grace received as others have.

6. Idolatry.

Sixthly, the Understanding's *Idolatry*, whereby the mind sets up and bows down to a false image of grace; that is, the mind being ignorant of the height and excellency of true grace, takes a false scantling of it, and so imagines and fancies within it self such a measure of common grace to be true grace, which the soul easily having attained unto, conceives it is in the estate of grace, and so deceives it self miserably, *Rom.* 10. 3. And the mind comes to set up her Image thus:

Men fancy common grace to be true grace.

1. First, the mind is haunted and pursued with troublesome fears of Hell, *Conscience* tells him he hath sinned, and the *Law* tells him he shall die, and *Death* appears and tells him he must shortly meet with him; and if he be taken away in his sins, then comes a black day of reckoning for all his privy pranks, a day of bloud, horror, judgement and fire, where no creature can comfort him. Hence saith he, Lord, keep my soul from these miseries; he hopeth it shall not prove so evil with him, but fears it will.

2. Secondly, hereupon he desireth peace and ease, and some assurance of freedom from these evils. For it is an hell above ground ever

ever to be on the rack of tormenting fears.

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Thirdly, that he may have ease, he will not swagger his trouble away, nor drown it in the bottom of the cup, nor throw it away with his Dice, nor play it away at Cards, but desires some grace, (and commonly it's the least measure of it too:) Hereupon he desires to hear such Sermons, and read such books, as may best satisfie him concerning the least measure of grace: for, sin onely troubling him, grace onely can comfort him soundly. And so *Grace*, which is meat and drink to an holy heart, is but Physick to this kind of men, to ease them of their fears and troubles. 3.

Hereupon, being ignorant of the height of *true grace*, he fancieth to himself such a measure of common *grace* to be true *grace*. As, if he feels himself ignorant of that which troubles him; so much knowledge will I then get, saith he. If some foul sins in his practice trouble him, these he will cast away, and so reforms. If omission of good Duties molests him, he will hear better, and buy some good Prayer-book, and pray oftner. And if he be perswaded such a man is a very honest man, then he will strive to do as he doeth. And now he is quieted. 4.

When he hath attained unto this pitch of his own, now he thinks himself a young beginner, and a good one too; so that if he dieth, he thinks he shall do well; if he liveth, he thinks and hopes he shall grow better: and when he is come to his own pitch, he here sets down his staff as fully satisfied. And now 5.

if

Man's perdition is of himself.

if he be preſt to get into the eſtate of grace, his anſwer is, *That is not to be done now, I thanks God; that care is paſt.* The truth is, Beloved, 'tis too high for him, his own legs could never carry him thither; all his grace coming by his own working, not by God Almighty's power. Let a man have falſe weights, he is cheated grievouſly with light Gold; why? becauſe his weights are too light: So theſe men have too light weights to judge of the Weight of true grace; therefore light, clipt, crackt pieces cheat them. Hence you ſhall have thoſe men commend pithleſs, ſapleſs men, for very honeſt men as ever brake bread; why? they are juſt anſwerable to their weights. Hence I have not much wondered at them who maintain that a man may fall away from true grace: the reaſon lieth here; they ſet up to themſelves ſuch a common work of grace to be true grace, from which no wonder that a man may fall. Hence *Bellarmine* ſaith, That which is true grace *veritate eſſentiæ* onely, may be loſt; not that grace which is true *veritate firmæ ſoliditatis*: which latter, being rightly underſtood, may be called *ſpecial grace*, as the other *common grace*. Hence alſo you ſhall have many Profeſſors hearing a Hundred Sermons never moved to grow better. Hence likewiſe you ſhall ſee our common Preachers comfort every one almoſt that they ſee troubled in mind, becauſe they think preſently they have true grace, now they begin to be ſorrowful for their ſins. 'Tis juſt according to their own *light weights*.

Bellarmine.

For

For the Lord's ſake take heed of this deceit. True *grace*, (I tell you) it's a rare Pearl, a glorious Sun clouded from the eyes of all but them that have it, *Rev.* 2. 17. a ſtrange, admirable, almighty work of God upon the ſoul, which no created power can produce; as far different, in the leaſt meaſure of it, from the higheſt degree of common grace, as a Devil is from an Angel; for 'tis Chriſt living, breathing, reigning, fighting, conquering in the ſoul. Down therefore with your *Idol-grace*, your *Idol-honeſty*; true *grace* never aims at a pitch, it aſpires only to perfection, *Phil.* 3. 12, 13. and therefore *Chryſoſtome* calls S. *Paul*, *inſatiabilis Dei cultor*, a greedy, inſatiable worſhipper of the Lord Almighty.

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True grace is clouded from the eyes of all but them that have it.

Seventhly, the Underſtanding's *errour is another cauſe of man's ruine.* And that is ſeen principally in theſe five things, theſe five errours or falſe conceits.

7. Errour a cauſe of man's ruine.

1. In judging ſome trouble of mind, ſome light ſorrow for ſin, to be true repentance; and ſo thinking they do repent, hope they ſhall be ſaved. For ſin is like ſweet poiſon, while a man is drinking it down by committing it, there is much pleaſure in it; but after the committing of it, there is a ſting in it, *Prov.* 23. 31, 32. *then* the time cometh when this poiſon works, making the heart ſwell with grief; ſorry they are at the heart, they ſay, for it; and the eyes drop, and the man that committed ſin with great delight, now cries out with grief in the bitterneſs of his

1.

Sin is like ſweet poiſon, pleaſant in the drinking, but bitter in the working.

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soul, *Oh that I, beast that I am, had never committed it! Lord, mercy, mercy*; *Prov.* 5. 3, 4, 11, 12. Nay, it may be they will fast, and humble, and afflict their souls voluntarily for sin, and now they think they have repented, *Isai.* 58. 3. and hereupon when they hear that all that sin shall die, they grant this is true indeed, except a man repent; and so they think *they have done already.* This is true, *At what time soever a sinner repents, the Lord will blot out his iniquity*: but this repentance is not when a man is troubled somewhat in mind for sin, but when he cometh to mourn for sin as his greatest evil, as if he should see all his goods and estate on a light fire before him; and that not for some sins, but all sins, little and great; and that not for a time, for a fit and away, (a land-flood of sorrow) but always, like a Spring, never dry, but ever running all a man's life-time.

2. Secondly, in judging the striving of conscience against sin to be the striving of the flesh against the spirit; and hence come these speeches from carnal black mouths, *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.* And hence men think, they, being thus compounded of flesh and spirit, are regenerate, and in no worse estate than the children of God themselves. As sometime I once spake with a man that did verily think that *Pilate* was an honest man, because he was so unwilling to crucifie Christ, which unwillingness did arise only from the restraint of conscience against the fact. So, many men judge honestly,

ly, yet simply, upon such a ground, of themselves: they say they strive against their sins, but, *Lord be merciful unto them*, they say, *the flesh is frail*. And hence *Arminius* gives a diverse interpretation of the seventh Chapter to the *Romans* from ordinary Divines; concerning which *Paul* speaks in the person of an unregenerate man, because he observed divers graceless persons, (as he saith himself) having fallen, and falling commonly into sins against conscience, to bring that Chapter in their own defence and comfort; because they did that which they allowed not, *verse* 15. and so it was not they, but *sin* that dwelled in them.

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Arminius.

And so, many among us know they should be better, and strive that they may grow better, but through the power of sin cannot; conscience tells them they must not sin, their hearts and lusts say they must sin; and here forsooth is flesh and spirit. Oh no, here is conscience and lust only by the ears together; which striving *Herod*, *Balaam*, *Pilate*, or the vilest reprobate in the World may have. Such a war argueth not any grace in the heart, but rather more strength of corruption, and more power of sin in the heart: as 'tis no wonder if a horse run away when he is loose; but when his bit and his bridle is in his mouth, now to be wild, argueth he is altogether untam'd and unsubdued. Take heed therefore of judging your estate to be good, because of some backwardness of your hearts to commit some sins, though

The striving of conscience and lust every reprobate may have.

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little sins; for thy sins may be, and it is most certain are, more powerful in *thee*, than in others that have not the like struglings, because *they* have not such checks as thou hast to restrain thee. Know therefore that the striving of the *spirit* against the *flesh* is against sin *because it is sin*; as a man hates a Toad, though he be never poisoned by it: But the striving of thy conscience against sin, is only against sin because it is a *troubling or a damning sin*. The striving of the spirit against the flesh is from a deadly hatred of sin, *Rom.* 7. 15. But the striving of conscience against sin is only from a fear of the danger of sin. For *Balaam* had a mind to curse the *Israelites*, for his money's sake; but if he might have had an house-full of silver and gold, (which is a goodly thing in a covetous eye) it is said, *He durst not curse them.*

3. Thirdly, in judging of the sincerity of the heart by some good affection in the heart. Hence many a deluded soul reasons the case out thus with himself: Either I must be a prophane man, or an hypocrite, or an upright man: Not prophane, I thank God; for I am not given to whoring, drinking, oppression, swearing: nor Hypocrite; for I hate these shews, I cannot endure to appear better without than I am within: Therefore *I am upright.* Why? Oh, because my heart is good; my affections and desires within are better than my life without; and whatever others judge of me, I know mine own heart, and the heart is all that God desires.

He that trusteth in his own heart, is a fool, &c.

And

And thus they fool themselves, *Prov.* 28. 26. This is one of the greatest causes and grounds of mistake amongst men that think best of themselves: they are not able to put a difference between good desires, and strong affections that arise from the love of Jesus Christ. Man's perdition is of himself.

Self-love will make a man seek his own good and safety: hence it will pull a man out of his bed betimes in the morning, and call him up to pray; it will take him and carry him into his Chamber towards evening, and there privately make him seek, and pray, and tug hard for pardon, for Christ, for mercy: *Lord, evermore give us of this bread.* But the love of Christ makes a man desire Christ and his honour for *himself*, and all other things for *Christ*. It is true, the desires of Sons in Christ by faith are accepted ever; but the desires of servants, men that work only for their wages, out of Christ, are not.

Fourthly, in judging of God's love to them, by aiming sometimes at the glory of God. Is this possible, that a man should aim at God's glory, and yet perish? Yes, and ordinarily too. A man may be liberal to the poor, maintain the Ministry, be forward to stand for good things, whence he may not doubt but that God loves him: but here's the difference, though a wicked man may make God's glory in some particular things his end, yet he never makes it in his general course his utmost and last end. A subtle Ap- 4. 2 Kings 10. 18.

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prentice may do all his Master's work, but he may take the gain to himself, or divide it betwixt his Master and himself, and so may be but a knave, as observant as he seems to be. So a subtle heart (yet a villainous heart) may forsake all the World, as *Judas* did, may bind himself Apprentice to all the duties God requires outwardly at his hands, and so do good works; but what's his last end? It's that he might gain respect or place, or that Christ may have some part of the glory, and he another. *Simon Magus* would give any money sometime that he could pray so well, know so much, and do as others do; and yet his last end is for himself. But *how can you believe, if you seek not that glory that comes from God*, saith Christ? There's many seek the honour of Christ, but do you seek his honour *only*? Is it your last end, where you rest and seek no more but *that*? If thou wouldest know whether thou makest Christ's glory thy last end, observe this rule;

If thou art more grieved for the eclipse of thine own honour, and for thine own losses, than for the loss of God's honour; it is an evident sign thou lovest it not, desirest it not as thy chiefest good, as the last end, for thy *summum bonum*, and therefore dost not seek God's honour in the prime and chiefest place. Sin troubled *Paul* more than all the plagues and miseries of the World. Indeed, if thy name be dashed with disgrace, and thy will be crossed, thy heart is grieved and disquieted;

God's honour should be sought as the chiefest good.

ed: but the Lord may lose his honour daily by thine own sins, and those that be round about thee, but not a tear, not a sigh, not a groan to behold such a spectacle. As sure as the Lord lives, thou seekest not the Lord's Name or Honour as thy greatest good.

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Fifthly, in judging the power of sin to be but *infirmity*. For if any thing troubles an unregenerate man, and makes him call his estate into question, it is sin, either in the being, or power of it. Now sin in the being ought not, must not make a man question his estate, because the best have that left in them that will humble them, and make them live by Faith: therefore the power of sin only can justly thus trouble a man. Now if a man do judge of this to be only but *infirmity*, which the best are compassed about withal, he cannot but lie down securely, and think himself well. And if this error be setled in one that lives in no one known sin, it is very difficult to remove: for, let the Minister cast the sparks of Hell in their faces, and denounce the terror of God against them, they are never stirred; why? because they think, *Here's for you that live in sin*; but as for themselves, although they have sins, yet they strive against them, and so cannot leave them; for, *we must have sins as long as we live here*, say they. Now mark it, there's no surer sign of a man under the bloudy reign and dominion of his lusts and sins than this, that is, to give way to sin, (though never so little and common) nor to be greatly troubled for

5.

Man's perdition is of himself

sin (for they may be a little troubled) because they cannot overcome sin. I deny not but the *best* do sin daily: yet this is the disposition of *Paul*, and every child of God, he mourneth not the less, but the more for sin; though he cannot quite subdue them, cast them out and overcome them. As a prisoner mourns the more that he is bound with such fetters he cannot break; so doth every one truly sensible of his woful captivity by sin. This is the great difference between a *raging sin* a man will part withal, and a sin of infirmity a man cannot part withal: A sin of infirmity is such a sin as a man would, but cannot, part with; and hence he mourns the more for it: *a raging sin* is such a sin as a man haply by virtue of his lashing conscience would sometimes part withal, but cannot; and hence mourns the less for it, and gives way to it. Now for the Lord's sake take heed of this deceit; for I tell you, those sins you cannot part withal, if you groan not day and night under them, (saying, O Lord, help me, for I am weary of my self, and my life) will certainly undo you. You say, you cannot but *speak idlely*, and *think vainly*, and *do ill*, as all do sometimes: I tell you, those sins shall be everlasting chains to hold you fast in the power of the Devil, until the Judgement of the *great day*.

And thus much of the Understanding's corruption, whereby men are commonly deluded; now followeth the second.

2. Secondly, in regard of the false bastard peace

peace begot in the conſcience. Why ſhould the Camp tremble when Scouts are aſleep, or give falſe report when the enemies are near them? Moſt men think they are in a ſafe eſtate, becauſe they were never in a troubled eſtate; or if they have been troubled, becauſe they have got ſome peace and comfort after it. Now this falſe peace is begot in the heart by theſe four means.

Man's perdition is of himſelf.

How falſe peace is bred in the ſoul.

1. By *Satan.*
2. By *falſe Teachers.*
3. By *a falſe ſpirit.*
4. By *a falſe application of true Promiſes.*

1. By *Satan*, whoſe Kingdom ſhall fall if it ſhould be divided, and be always in a combuſtion; hence he laboureth for peace, *Luke* 11.24. *When the ſtrong man keepeth the Palace, his goods are in peace*: that is, when Satan armed with abundance of ſhifts and carnal reaſonings poſſeſſeth mens ſouls, they are at peace. Now look as maſters give their ſervants peace, even ſo the Devil.

I. By Satan.

1. By removing all things that may trouble them. And,

2. By giving unto them all things that may quiet and comfort them; as meat, drink, reſt, lodging, &c. So doth Satan deal with his ſlaves and ſervants.

First, by removing thoſe ſins which trouble the conſcience; for a man may live in a ſin, and yet never be troubled for that ſin; for ſin againſt the light of conſcience onely troubles the conſcience; As children that are tum-

1.

Man's perdition is of himself.

tumbling and playing in the duſt, they are not troubled with all the duſt, nay they take pleaſure to wallow in it; but only with that (whether it be ſmall or great) that lights in their eyes. And hence that young man came boaſting to Chriſt, that he had kept all the Commandments from his youth; *but went away ſorrowful*, becauſe that duſt, that *ſin* he lived in with delight before, fell into his eyes, and therefore was troubled. Now mark the plot of the Devil: When he can make a man live, and wallow and delight in his ſins, and ſo ſerve him, and yet will not ſuffer him to live in any ſin againſt conſcience, whereby he ſhould be troubled, and ſo ſeek to come out of this woful eſtate, *he is ſure this man is his own*: and now the poor deluded man himſelf goes up and down, not doubting but he ſhall be ſaved; why? becauſe their conſcience (they thank God) is clear, and they know of no one ſin they live in, they know nothing by themſelves that may make them ſo much as ſuſpect their eſtate is bad, *Matth.* 9. 13. *I came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance*, that is, ſuch an one as in his own opinion is ſound whole. Every ſin being a child of God's ſickneſs, he is never without ſome kind of ſorrow: but ſome ſins only being a natural man's ſickneſs, they being removed, he recovers out of his former ſorrow, and grows well again, and thinks himſelf ſound: the Lord Jeſus never came to ſave ſuch, therefore Satan keeps poſſeſſion of them. For the Lord's ſake look to this ſubtil-

subtilty: many think themselves in a good estate, because they know not the particular sin they live in: whereas Satan may have stronger possession of such as are bound with his invisible fetters and chains, when those that have their pinching bolts on them may sooner escape.

Man's perdition is of himself.

Secondly, by giving the soul *liberty* to recreate it self in any sinful course, wherein the eye of conscience may not be pricked and wounded. Servants when they are put always to work, and never can go abroad, are weary both of work and Master: that Master pleaseth them that giveth them most liberty. To be pent up all the day long in doing God's work, *watching*, *praying*, *fighting* against every sin, this is a burthen, this is too strict; and because that they cannot endure it, they think the Lord looks not for it at their hands. Now Satan gives men liberty in their sinful courses, and this liberty begets peace, and this peace makes them think well of themselves, 2 *Pet.* 2. 19. There are many rotten Professors in these days, that indeed will not open their mouths against the sincere hearted people of God, yet they walk loosly, and take too much liberty in their speeches, liberty in their thoughts, liberty in their desires and delights, liberty in their company, in their pastimes, and that sometimes under a pretence of Christian liberty; and never trouble themselves with these needless controversies, To what end, or in what manner do I use these things? Whereas the righteous man feareth

2. By Liberty in sin.

alway,

Man's perdition is of himself.

alway, considering there is a snare for him in every lawful liberty: May not I sin in my *mirth*, in my *speaking*, in my *sleeping*? O this liberty that the Devil gives, and the World takes, besots most men with a foolish opinion that all is well with them.

3. Unlawful secret lust to be avoided.

Thirdly, by giving the soul good diet, *meat* and *drink* enough, what dish he likes best. Let a Master give liberty, yet his servant is not pleased, unless he have meat and drink and food: so there's no wicked man under Heaven, but as he takes too much liberty in the use of lawful things; so he feedeth his heart with some unlawful secret lust, though all the time he live in it, it may be, it is unknown to him. *Luke* 16. *Dives* had his diet, his *good things*, and so sang himself asleep, and bad his soul *take his ease and rest*. Yet observe this, diet is poisoned in it self, but even commended to the soul as wholsome, good and lawful. They Christen sin with a new name, as Popes are at their election: if he be bad, they call him sometimes *Pius*; if a coward, *Leo*, &c. So *Covetousness* is good husbandry; *Company-keeping*, good neighbourhood; *Lying*, to save their credit from cracking, but a handsome excuse: and hence the soul goes peaceably on, and believes he is in a good estate.

4. Fourthly, by giving the soul rest and sleep, that is, cessation sometimes from the act of sin: hence they are hardly perswaded that they live in sin, because they cease sometimes from the act of sin; as no man doth always swear,

swear; nor is he always drunk, nor always angry. They think only their falls in these or the like sins, are slips and falls which the best man may have sometimes, and yet be a dear child of God. Oh! Satan will not alwayes set men at his work: For if men should always have their cups in their hands, and their queans in their arms; if a covetous man should always root in the earth, and never pray, never have good thoughts, never keep any Sabbath; if a man should always speak *idlely*, and never good word drop from him; a man's conscience would never be quiet, but shaking him up for what he doth: but by giving him respite from sinning for a time, Satan getteth stronger possession afterward; as *Matth.* 12.43. *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, it returns worse.* *Sampson*'s strength always remained, and so doth sin's strength in a natural man, but it never appears until temptation comes.

Man's perdition is of himself.

Fifthly, by giving the soul fair promises of Heaven and eternal life, and fastning them upon the heart. Most men are confident their *estate is good*; and though God kills them, yet will they trust in him, and cannot be beaten from this. Why? Oh! Satan bewitcheth them: for as he told *Evah* by the Serpent, *she should not die*; so doth he insinuate his perswasions to the soul, though he live in sin, he shall not die, but do well enough as the preciseſt. Satan gives thus *good words*, but *woful wages*, the eternal flashes of Hell.

5. Fair promises of heaven.

2. *By false Teachers*, partly by their loose examples,

Man's perdition is of himself.

2. False teachers flatter men in their sins, applying comfort to them that should be wounded.

examples, partly by their flattering doctrines in publick, and their large charity in private, dawbing up every one, (especially him that is a good friend unto them) for honest and religious people; and if they be but a little troubled, applying comfort presently, and so healing them that should be wounded, and not telling them roundly of their *Herodias*, as *John Baptist* did *Herod*. Hereupon they judge themselves honest, because the Minister will give them the beggerly pass-port; and so they go out of the World, and die like lambs, wofully cheated, *Mat.* 24. 11. Look abroad in the World, and see what is the reason so many feed their hearts with confidence they shall be saved, yet their lives condemn them, and their hearts acquit them. The reason is, such and such a Minister will go to the Ale-house, and he never prays in his family, and he is none of these precise hot people, and yet as honest a man as ever lived, and a good Divine too. *Ahab* was miserably cheated by four hundred false Prophets. Whilest the Minister is of a loose life himself, he will wink at others and their faults, lest in reproving others he should condemn himself, and others should say unto him, *Physician, heal thy self*. Thieves of the same company will not steal from one another, lest they trouble themselves thereby. And hence they give others false Cards to sail by, false Rules to live by; their unconscionable large charity is like a gulph that swalloweth ships (souls I mean) tossed with tempests, and not comforted,

Isa. 54.

Isa. 54. 7, 8. And hence, all being fish that cometh to their net, all men think so of themselves.

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3. A *false spirit*, this is a third cause that begets a false peace. As there is a true *Spirit, that witnesseth to our spirits that we are the sons of God, Rom.* 8. 16. so there is a false spirit, just like the true one, witnessing that they are the sons of God, 1 *John* 4. 1. we are bid to *try the spirits*: Now if these spirits were not like God's true Spirit, what need trial? as, what need one try whether Dirt be Gold, which are so unlike each other? And this spirit I take to be set down, *Mat.* 24. 23. Now look as the true Spirit witnesseth, so the false spirit, being like it, witnesseth also.

3. There is a false spirit that speaks peace, when there is war.

First, the Spirit of God humbles the soul: so before men have the witness of the *false spirit*, they are mightily cast down and dejected in spirit; and hereupon they pray for ease, and purpose to lead new lives, and cast away their weapons, and submit, *Psal.* 66. 3.

1. Comparison between true and false spirits.

Secondly, the Spirit of God in the Gospel reveals Jesus Christ and his willingness to save: so the *false spirit* discovereth Christ's excellency, and willingness to receive him, if he will but come in. It fareth with this soul as with Surveyors of lands, that take an exact compass of other mens grounds, of which they shall never enjoy a foot. So did *Balaam*, *Num.* 24. 5, 9. this false spirit sheweth them the glory of Heaven and God's people.

2. The spirit of God reveals Christ willing to save.

Thirdly, hereupon the soul cometh to be affected, and to taste the goodness and sweetness

Man's perdition is of himself.

nesse of Jesus Christ, as those did, *Heb.* 6. and the soul breaks out into a passionate admiration, Oh that ever there should be any hope for such a vile wretch as I am and have been! and so joyes exceedingly, like a man half-way wrapt up into Heaven.

4. Fourthly, hereupon the soul, being comforted after it was wounded, now calleth God *my God*, and Christ *my sweet Saviour*: and now it doubts not but it shall be saved; why? because I have received much comfort after much *sorrow and doubting*, *Hos.* 8. 2, 3. and yet remains a deluded miserable creature still. But here mark the difference between the witness of each spirit. The *false spirit* makes a man believe he is in the state of grace, and shall be saved, because he hath *tasted* of Christ, and so hath been comforted, and that abundantly: But the *true spirit* perswades a man his estate is good and safe, because he hath not only tasted, but *bought* this Christ; as the wise Merchant in the Gospel, that rejoyced he had found *the Pearl*, but yet stays not here, but sells away all, and *buys* the Pearl. Like two Chapmen that come to buy Wine. The one tastes it, and goeth away in a drunken fit, and so concludes it is his: so a man doth that hath the false spirit: But the true spirited-man doth not only taste, but buys the Wine; although he doth not drink it all down when he cometh to taste it, yet he having been incited by tasting to buy it, *now* he calls it his own: so a child of God tasting a little of God, and a little of Christ, and a little of the Promises,

The false spirit perswades a man he is in a good estate, when he is not.

ſes, at his firſt converſion; although he taſts not all the ſweetneſs that is in God, yet he forſakes all for God, for Chriſt, and ſo takes them lawfully as his own.

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Again, the falſe ſpirit having given a man comfort and peace, ſuffers a man to reſt in that eſtate; but the true Spirit having made the ſoul taſt the love of the Lord, ſtirreth up the ſoul to doe and work mightily for the Lord. Now the ſoul crieth out, *What ſhall I doe for Chriſt, that hath done wonders for me?* If every hair on my head were a tongue to ſpeak of his goodneſs, it were too little. *Neh.* 8. 10. *The joy of the Lord is our ſtrength. Pſal.* 51. 12. *Uphold me with thy free ſpirit*; or, as the *Chaldean* Paraphraſe hath it; thy *Kingly Spirit*. The Spirit of Adoption in God's child is no underling, ſuffering man to lie down and cry, My deſires are good, but fleſh is frail: No, it is a Kingly Spirit, that *reigns* where it *liveth*.

The true ſpirit, when it hath taſted of God, deſires more of God.

4. *Falſe applying of true Promiſes* is the laſt cauſe of falſe peace. And when a man hath God's Spirit within, and God's hand and Promiſe (as he thinks) for his eſtate; now he thinks all ſafe. This did the *Jews*; they ſaid, *We have Abraham to our father*; and ſo reputed themſelves ſafe: God having made them a promiſe; *I will be a God of thee and of thy ſeed.* But here is a difference between a child of God's application of them and a wicked man's. The firſt applieth them ſo to him, as that he liveth upon them, and nothing but them; and to whom doth the dog belong, but

4.

The Jews thought themſelves happy, becauſe they had *Abraham* to their father.

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to the child that lives upon it? The other lives upon his lusts, and creatures, and yet catcheth hold on the Promise.

By these four means is begot a bastard false peace.

Thus much of the second cause of man's deceiving himself, False peace in the Conscience.

Now followeth the Third,

3. The corruptions and distempers of the *Will*, which is the third cause why men deceive themselves; which are many, I will only name three.

3. The third cause of man's being deceived.

1. First, when the *Will* is resolved to go on in a sinful course, and then sets the understanding a work to defend it. Whence it fareth with the soul as with a man that cometh to search for stoln goods, who having received a bribe before-hand, searcheth every where but where it is, and so the man is never found out to be what he is: So a man having tasted the sweetness of a sinful course (which pleasure bribes him) he is contented to search into every corner of his heart, and to try himself as many do, except *there* where his darling lust lies; *he sits upon that*, and covers it willingly from his own eyes, as *Rachel* did upon stoln gods, and so never finds out himself, *Job.* 3. 20. A man that hath a mind to sleep quietly, will cause the curtains to be drawn, and will let some light come in, but shuts out all that or so much as may hinder him from sleeping: so a man having a mind to sleep in some particular sinful course at his ease,

ease, will search himself, and let some light come into his mind.

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And hence many prophane persons that know much, (their opinions are orthodox, their discourse savory) yet do they know little of themselves, and of those sins and lusts that haunt them, which they must part with; because this light troubleth them, it hinders them from sleeping in their secure estate, and therefore they draw the curtain here. Hence many men that live in those sins of the grossest Usury, finding the gain, and tasting the sweet of that sin, will read all Books, go to all those Ministers they suppose that hold it lawful, and so pick up and gather reasons to defend the lawfulness of the sin; and so because they would not have it to be a sin, find out reasons whereby they think it no sin: but the bottom is this, their *will* hath got the bribe, and now the understanding plays the Lawyer: and hence men live in the most crying sins, and are sure to perish, because they will not know they are in an error.

When men have tasted the sweetness of sin, they are like bribed Lawyers, ready to plead for it.

Secondly, when the *will* sets the Understanding a work to extenuate and lessen sin; for many when they see their sin, yet make it small, by looking at the false end of their Optick-glass; they think such small matters never make any breach between the Lord and their souls. Hence they say, *The best men sins seven times a day*; and *Who can say, my heart is clean*? What is the reason that a child of God hath little peace, many times, after commission of small sins? Oh! it is because they

2. Wicked men will lessen and excuse their sins, &c.

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see the horrible nature of the least sin; small wrongs against so dear, so great a friend as the Lord is, it cuts their hearts: yet a carnal heart is never troubled for great sins, because they make a light matter of them.

3. When men are wilfully ignorant, they never fear their estates.

Thirdly, wilfull ignorance of the horrible wrath of God. Hence men rush on in sin as the horse into the battle. Hence men never fear their estates, because they know not God's wrath hanging over them. Coldest snakes, when they are frozen with cold, never sting nor hurt, one may carry a nest of them in his bosome; but bring them to the fire, then they hiss and sting: So sin, when it is brought near God's wrath, (that devouring fire) it makes men cry out of themselves, Then I am undone; Oh! I am a lost creature; but being not thus heated, sin never makes a man cry out of himself.

These are the causes why men are ignorant of their wofull, miserable estate; which *Ignorance* is the first Rock, or the first powder-plot, that spoils thousands.

Yet there are three more dangerous, because more secret.

II. The second Reason why men ruine themselves is carnal Security.

Now followeth the Second Reason of man's ruine; by reason of man's *carnal security*, whereby men cannot be affected with, nor so much as have hearts to desire to come out of their misery when they know it: for if a man's mind understand his misery, yet if the heart be hard or sleepy, and not affected, loaden, wounded, humbled, and made to groan under it, he will never greatly care to come out of

it,

it, *Isa.* 29. 9, 10. Now this is the estate of many a soul; he doth know his misery, but by reason of the sleepy, secure, senslesse spirit of slumber, he never feels it, nor mourns under it, and so comes not out of it.

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Now the reasons of this security are these: 1. Because God pours not out the full measure of his wrath upon men, because he kindles not the pile of wrath that lies upon men, it's reserved, and concealed, *not revealed from Heaven*; and so long, let God frown, Ministers threaten, and smaller judgements drop, yet they will never seek shelter in Jesus Christ, but sleep in their sins; until God rain down floods of horrour, blond, fire, until God's arrows stick in mens hearts, they will never seek out of themselves unto Jesus Christ, *Eccles.* 8. 11. So long as God's plagues were upon *Pharaoh*, he giveth fair words, and *Moses* must be sent to pray for him; but when God's hand is taken away, now *Pharaoh*'s heart is hardned. So, so long as God's sword is in his Scabbard, men have such stout hearts that they will never yield; God must wound, and cut deep, and stab, and thrust to the very heart, else men will never yield, never awaken; till God's fists be about mens ears, and he is dragging them to the stake, men will never awake, and cry for pardon and deliverance out of their wofull estate.

Reasons of security.

Reas. 1. Why men ruine themselves. Nah. 1. 2.

So long as God's wrath lies upon men, they give good words; but when it is removed, they harden their hearts as Pharaoh.

Secondly, because if they do in part feel, and so fear God's wrath, they put away the evil day far from them, they hope they shall doe better hereafter, and repent some other

Reas. 2. Why men ruine themselves.

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time, and therefore they say, Soul, eat, drink, follow thy pleasures, cups, queans, thou hast a treasure of time which shall not be spent in many years. *Isa.* 22. 12, 13. that look as it is with the Wax, let it be of never so pliable a disposition, and the fire never so hot, yet if it be not brought near the fire, and be held in the fire, it never melts, but still remains hard: so is it here, let a man or woman have never so gentle or pliable a nature, and let God's wrath be never so hot and dreadful in their judgments, yet if they make not the day of wrath present to them, if they see it not ready every moment to light upon their hearts, they are never melted, but they remain hard-hearted, secure, sleepy wretches, and never groan to come out of their woful estate. And this is the reason why many men, that have guilty consciences, though they have many secret wishes and purposes to be better, yet never cry out of themselves, nor ever seek earnestly for mercy, till they lie upon their death-beds: and then, Oh the promises they play God with! *Try me, Lord, and restore me once more to my health and life again, and thou shalt see how thankfully I will requite it.* Because that now they apprehend wrath and misery near unto them.

Reason 3. Why men impose upon themselves.

Thirdly, because they think they can bear God's wrath, though they do conceive it near at hand, even at the very doors: men think not that hell is so hot, nor the Devil so black, nor God so terrible as indeed he is. And hence we shall observe the Prophets pre-

sent

sent God's wrath as a thing intollerable before the eyes of the people, that thereby they might quench all those cursed conceits of being able to bear God's wrath, *Nahum* 1. 9. And hence we shall have many men desperately conclude, They will have their swing in sin, and if they perish, they hope they shall be able to bear it; *it is but a damning*, they think, and hence they go on securely. Oh poor wretches! the Devil scares and fears all the World, and at God's wrath the Devils quake; and yet secure men fear it not, they think Hell is not so terrible a place.

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Fourthly, because they know no better an estate. Hence though they feel their woful and miserable condition, yet they desire not to come out of it. Although men find hard lodging in the World, hard times, hard friends, hard hearts, yet they make a shift with what they find in this miserable Inne, until they come to Hell; for such a man pursued by outward miseries or inward troubles, there stays. Oh miserable man, that makes shift till he comes to Hell! They may hear of the happy estate of God's people, but not knowing of it experimentally, they stay where they are, *Job* 4. 14.

Reason 4. Why men ruine themselves.

Take a Prince's child, and bring it up in a base house and place, it never aspires after a Kingdom or Crown: so men hatcht in this World, knowing no better an estate, never cast about them to get a better inheritance then that they scramble for here. Wives mourn for the long absence of their beloved

Husbands, because they know them and their worth; God may absent himself from men weeks, moneths, years; but men shed not one tear for it, because they never tasted the *sweetness* of his *presence*. It is strange to see men take more content in their cups and cards, pots and pipes, dogs and Hawks, then in the fellowship of God and Christ, in Word, in Prayer, in Meditation, which Ordinances are burthens and prisons unto them. What is the reason of it? Is there no more *sweetness* in the presence of God's smiling in Christ, then in a filthy Whore? Yes, but they know not the worth, sweetness, satisfying goodness of a God. Some Sea-fish, (they say) if once they come into fresh water, will never return again, because they now taste a difference between those brackish, and sweet waters: So it is here; if men did but once taste the happiness of God's people, they would not for a thousand worlds be one half hour in their wild loose sea again.

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Wicked men take more pleasure in lusts then in the fellowship of God and Christ.

5ly. Because if they do know a better estate, yet their present pleasures, their sloth doth so bewitch them, and God's denials when they seek unto him do so far discourage them, that they sleep still securely in that estate. A slothful heart, bewitch'd with present ease, and pleasures and delights, considering many a tear, many a prayer must it make, many a night must it break its sleep, many a weary step must it take towards Heaven and Christ, if ever it come there, grows discourag'd and deaded, and hard-hearted in a sleepy estate, and had rather

Reason 5. Why men ruine themselves.

have *a bird in the hand then two in the bush.* The *Israelites* wish'd *that they were at their onions and garlick again in Ægypt.* Was there no *Canaan?* Yes, but they wished so, because *there were walls built up to Heaven, and Giants, sons of Anak, in the land,* difficulties to overcome. O slothful hearts! Secondly, because God sometimes put them to streights, and denied them what they sought for, they were of such a waspish, testy, sullen spirit, that, because the Lord had them not always on his knees, they would run away. So many a man meets with sorrow enough in his sinful, dropsick, drunken estate; he hears of Heaven and a better estate, yet why goes he to his lusts and flesh-pots again? Oh, because there are so many difficulties, and blocks, and hinderances in his way; and because they pray, and find not ease, therefore they eat, drink, laugh, sport, and sleep in their miserable estate still, *Matth. 7. 14.* Therefore men walk in the *broad way,* because the other *way to life is streight and narrow;* it is a plague, a burthen, a prison, to be so strict: men had rather sit almost an hour in the stocks, then be an hour at prayer; men had rather be damned at last, then sweat it out, and run through the race to receive a Crown: and hence men remain secure.

Man's perdition is of himself.

O Lord my God

Sixthly, because of the strange, strong power of sin, which bears that sway over mens souls, that they must serve it, as prisoners stoop to their Gaolers, as Souldiers that have taken their pay, *their pleasure of sin,* must follow

Reason 6. Why men ruine themselves. *Rom. 1. ult.*

Man's perdition is of himself.

low it as their Captain, though they go marching on to eternal ruine; nay, though doomsday should be to morrow, yet they must and will serve their lusts. As the *Sodomites*, when they were smitten with blindness, which tormented their eyes, as though they had been pricked with thorns, (for so the *Hebrew* word signifies) even when destruction was near, they groped for the door. Men cannot but sin, though they perish for sin: hence they remain secure.

Reas. 7. Why men ruine themselves.

Seventhly, despair of God's mercy. Hence like *Cain*, men are Runagates from the face of God: men think they shall never find mercy when all is done, hence they grow desperately sinful; like those *Italian Senators*, that despairing of their lives, when upon submission they had been promised their lives, yet being conscious of their villany, made a curious banquet, and at the end of it every man drank up his glass of poyson, and killed himself: so men feeling such horrible hard hearts, and being privy to such notorious sins, they cast away lives, and Heaven, and Soul, for lost, and so perish wofully, because they lived desperately, and so securely.

Reas. 8. Why men ruine themselves.

Eighthly, because men nourish a blind, false, flattering hope of God's mercy: hence many knowing and suspecting that all is naught with them, yet having some hope they *may be in a good estate, and God may love them*, hence they lie down securely, and rest in their flattering hope. Hence observe, those people that seldom come to a conclusion, to a point,

that

that either they are in the state of grace, or out of it, that never come to be affected, but remain secure in their condition, they commonly grow to this desperate conclusion; *That they hope God will be merciful unto them; if not, they cannot help it*: like the man that had on his Target the picture of God and the Devil; under the first he writ, *Si tu non vis, If thou wilt not*; under the other he writ, *Ipse rogitat, here's one will.*

Man's perdition is of himself.

Ninthly, because men bring not their hearts under the Hammer of God's Word to be broken, they never bring their consciences to be cut. Hence they go on still securely with festred consciences. Men put themselves above the Word, and their hearts above the Hammer; they come not to have the Minister to humble them, but to judge of him, or to pick some pretty fine thing out of the Word, and so remain secure sots all their days: for if ever thy heart be broken, and thy conscience be awaked, the Word must doe it: but people are so Sermon-trodden, that their hearts, like foot-paths, grow hard by the Word.

Reas. 9. Why men ruine themselves.

Tenthly, because men consider not of God's wrath daily, nor the horrible nature of sin, men chew not these pills: Hence they never come to be affected nor awakened.

Reas. 10. Why men ruine themselves.

Awaken therefore all you secure creatures; feel your misery, that so you may get out of it. Dost thou know thine estate is naught, and that thy condemnation will be fearful, if ever thou dost perish? and is thine heart secretly secure, so damnably dead, so desperately hard, that

Man's perdition is of himself.

that thou haſt no heart to come out of it? What? no ſighs, no tears? canſt thou carry all thy ſins upon thy back, like *Samſon* the gates of the City, and make a light matter of them? Doſt thou ſee Hell-fire before thee, and yet wilt venture? Art thou worſe then a beaſt, which we cannot beat nor drive into the fire, if there be any way to eſcape? Oh get thy heart to lament and mourn under thy miſeries, who knows then but the Lord may pity thee? But Oh hard heart! thou canſt mourn for loſſes and croſſes, burning of goods and houſes; yet though God be loſt, and his Image burnt down, and all is gone, thou canſt not mourn. If thine heart were truly affected, the pillow would be waſhed with thy tears, and the Wife in thy boſome would be witneſs of thy heart-breakings at midnight for thoſe ſins which have grieved the Spirit of God many a time; thou couldſt not ſleep quietly nor comfortably without aſſurance. If you were ſick to death, Phyſicians ſhould hear how you doe; and if you were humbled, we ſhould have you in the bitterneſs of your ſpirit cry out, *What ſhall we doe?* But know it, thou muſt mourn here or in Hell. If God *broke David's bones* for his adultery, and the Angels backs for their pride; the Lord, whoever he ſaves thee, will break thine heart too.

Men mourn for the loſs of goods, but not for the loſs of God.

Queſt. *Anſw.*

Queſt. But thou wilt ſay, How ſhall I doe to get mine heart affected with my miſery?

How to get a broken heart. Two things harden the heart.

Anſw. 1. Take a full view of thy miſery. 2. Take ſpecial notice of the Lord's readineſs and willingneſs to receive thee yet un-

to

to mercy. For two things harden the heart. 1. *False hope*, whereby a man hopes he is not so bad as indeed he is. 2. *No hope*, whereby a man, when he sees himself so notoriously bad, thinks there is no willingness in the Lord to pardon or receive such a monster of men to mercy. And if neither the hammer can break thy stony heart, nor the Sun-shine of mercy melt it, thou hast a heart worse then the Devil, and art a spectacle of the greatest misery, 1. in regard of sin, 2. in regard of God's wrath.

Man's perdition is of himself.

That heart is hard, that neither mercy nor judgment will break.

First, in regard of sin. Thou hast sinned, and that grievously, against a great God: thou makest no great matter of this: no? but though it be no load to thee, it is a load on the Lord's heart, *Isa.* 1. 24. and time will come he will make the whole sinful World, by Rivers of fire and bloud, to know what an evil it is.

1.

For 1. In every sin thou dost strike God and fling a dagger at the heart of God. 2. In every sin thou dost spite against God: for if there were but *one* onely thing wherein a man could doe his friend a displeasure, was not here spite seen if he did that thing? Now tell me, hath not the Lord been a *good friend* unto thee? Tell me, wherein hath he grieved thee? And tell me, in what one thing canst thou please the Devil, and doe God a displeasure, but by sin? Yet, O hard heart! thou makest nothing of it. But consider thirdly, in every sin thou dost dethrone God, and settest thy self above God: for in every sin this question

1.

2.

3.

Men by sinning set up their own will above God's.

Man's perdition is of himself.

stion is put, *Whose will shall be done, God's will or man's?* Now man by sin sets his own will above the Lord's, and so kicks God (blessed for ever, adored of millions of Saints and Angels) as filth under his feet. What, will this break your hearts?

2. God's wrath the certainty of it.

Consider then of God's wrath, the certainty of it, the unsupportableness of it, how that dying in thy sins, and secure estate, it *shall fall*; for when men cry *Peace, Peace*, then cometh *sudden destruction as unawares*. Pray therefore to God to reveal this to thee, that thine heart may break under it. Secondly, consider the Lord's mercy and readiness to save thee, who hath prepared mercy, and intreats thee to take it, and waiteth every day for thee to that end.

1 Thes. 5. 3, 4.

2 Cor. 5. 19.

III. The third general reason of man's ruine.

The Third Reason of man's ruine is, the *carnal Confidence* whereby men *seek to save themselves*, and to scramble out of their miserable estate by their *own duties and performances*, when they do feel themselves miserable: the Soul doeth as those *Hosea* 5. 13. Men when they be wounded and troubled they never look after *Jesus Christ*, but go to their own waters to heal themselves; like hunted Harts when the Arrow is in them. *Rom.* 9. 31, 32.

For the opening of this point, I shall shew you these two things.

Wherein mens resting in Duties appears.

1. Wherein this resting in *Duties* appears.

2. Why men rest in *themselves*.

1. First, this resting in *Duties* appears in these ten degrees.

1. The

1. The soul of a poor sinner, if ignorantly bred and brought up, rests confidently in superstitious vanities. Ask a *devout Papist* how he hopes to be saved; he will answer, By his good works: But enquire farther, what are these good works; why, for the most part superstitious ones of their own inventions, (for the Crow thinks her own bird fairest) as Whipping themselves, Pilgrimage, Fasting, Mumbling over their *Pater-nosters*, Bowing down to Images and Crosses.

Man's perdition is of himself.

1.

2. Now these being banished from the Church and Kingdom, then men stand upon their titular profession of the true Religion, although they be Devils incarnate in their lives. Look up and down the Kingdom, you shall see some roaring, drinking, dicing, carding, whoring, in Taverns and blind Alehouses; others belching out their oaths, their mouths ever casting out, like *raging Seas*, filthy frothy speeches; others, like *Ismaels*, scoffing at the best men: yet these are confident they shall be saved. Why, (say they) they are no Papists; hang them, they will die for their Religion, and rather burn then turn, by the grace of God. Thus the *Jews* boasted they were *Abraham's seed*: so our carnal people boast; Am not I a good Protestant? am not I baptized? do I not live in the Church? and therefore resting here, hope to be saved. I remember a Judge, when one pleaded once with him for his life, that he might not be hanged, because he was a Gentleman; he told him that therefore he should have the Gallows made higher

2.

Men stand upon their titular profession of Religion.

Zeph. 3. 11.

for

Man's perdition is of himself.

for him: so when thou pleadest, I am a Christian, and a good Protestant, (yet thou wilt drink, and swear, and whore, neglect Prayer, and break God's Sabbath) and therefore thou hopest to be saved; I tell thee, thy condemnation shall be greater, and thy plagues in Hell the heavier.

Mens condemnation will be greater for living debauchedly where the Gospel is preached.

3. If men have no peace here, then they flie to and rest in the goodness of their insides. You will have many a man, whom if you follow to his Chamber, you shall find very devout, and there pray heartily for the mercy of God, and forgiveness of sins; but follow them out of their Chamber, watch their discourse, you shall find it frothy and vain, and now and then powdered with *faith* and *truth*, and obscene speeches. Watch them when they are croft, you shall see them as angry as Wasps, and swell like Turkies, and so spit out their venom like Dragons. Watch them in their journeys, and you shall see them shoot into an Alehouse, and there swill and swagger, and be familiar with the scum of the Country for prophaneness, and half drunk too sometimes. Watch them on the Lord's day, take them out of the Church once, and set aside their best cloaths, and they are then the same as at another time; and because they must not work nor sport that day, they think they may with a good conscience sleep the longer in the morning. Ask now such men how they hope to be saved, seeing their lives are so bad; they say, though they make not such shews, they know what good prayers they

3. If no peace come from ritual profession, men flie to their good insides.

they make in private, their hearts (they say) are good. I tell ye, Brethren, he that trusteth to his own heart, and his good desires, and so resteth in them, is a fool. I have heard of a man that would haunt the Taverns, and Theatres, and Whore-houses, at *London* all day; but he durst not go forth without private prayer in a morning, and then would say at his departure, *Now, Devil, doe thy worst*; and so used his prayers (as many do) onely as charms and spells against the poor, weak, cowardly Devil, that they think dares not hurt them, so long as they have good hearts within them, and good prayers in their Chambers. And hence they will go near to rail against the Preacher as an harsh Master, if he do not comfort them with this, *That God accepts of their good desires.*

Man's perdition is of himself.

4. If their good hearts cannot quiet them, but conscience tells them they are unsound without, and rotten at *core* within, then men fall upon reformation; they will leave their whoring, drinking, cozening, gaming, company-keeping, swearing, and such like roaring sins: and now all the Countrey saith he is become a new man, and he himself thinks he shall be saved, 2 *Pet.* 2. 22. They escape the pollutions of the World, as swine that are escaped and washed from outward filth, yet the swinish nature remains still. Like Mariners that are going to some dangerous place ignorantly, if they meet with storms, they go not backward, but cast out their goods that endanger their Ship, and so go forward still:

4. If no comforts come from their good insides, they reform some gross sins.

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so, many a man going towards Hell, is forced to cast out his lusts and sins, but he goeth on in the same way still for all that. The wildest beasts, (as Stags) if they be kept waking from sleep long, will grow tame: so conscience giving a man no rest for some sins he liveth in, he groweth tame; he that was a wild Gentleman before, remains the same man still, onely he is made tame *now*, that is, civil and smooth in his whole course: and hence they rest in reformation. Which reformation is, commonly, but from some troublesome sin, and it is because they think it's better following their trade of sin at another market; and hence some men will leave their *drinking* and *whoring*, and turn *covetous*, because there is more gain at that market: sometimes it is because sin hath left them, as an old man.

3. If no comfort in reforming gross sins, they flie to humiliation, repentance, &c.

5. If they can have no rest here, they get into another starting hole, they go to their *Humiliations*, *Repentings*, *Tears*, *Sorrows*, and *Confessions*. They hear a man cannot be saved by reforming his life, unless he come to afflict his soul too; he must sorrow and weep here, or else cry out in Hell hereafter: hereupon they betake themselves to their sorrows, tears, confession of sins; and now the wind is down, and the tempest is over, and they make themselves safe. *Matth.* 11. 21. *They would have repented*, that is, the *Heathen*, as *Beza* speaks; when any wrath was kindled from Heaven, they would go to their *sackcloth* and *sorrows*, and so thought to pacifie God's anger again,

again, and here they rested; so it is with many a man; many people have sick fits and qualms of conscience, and then they doe as Crows, that give themselves a vomit by swallowing down some stone when they are sick, and then they are well again; so when men are troubled for their sins, they will give themselves a vomit of *prayer*, a vomit of *confession* and *humiliation*, *Isa.* 58.5. Hence many, when they can get no good by this physick, by their *sorrows* and *tears*, cast off all again; for making these things their God and their Christ, they forsake them, when they cannot save them, *Matt.* 3.14. More are driven to Christ by the sense of the burthen of an hard, dead, blind, filthy heart, then by the sense of *sorrows*; because a man rests in the one, *viz.* in *sorrows*, most commonly, but trembles and flies out of himself when he feels the other. Thus men rest in their repentance: and therefore *Austin* hath a pretty speech which sounds harsh, that *Repentance damneth more then sin*; meaning, that thousands did perish by resting in it; and hence we see among many people, if they have large affections, they think they are in good favour; if they want them they think they are cast-aways, when they cannot mourn nor be affected as once they were, because they rest in them.

Man's perdition is of himself.

More driven to Christ by a hard heart, then by a sorrowful heart.

6. If they have no rest here, then they turn *moral men*, that is, strict in all the duties of the moral law, which is a greater matter then reformation, or humiliation; that is, they grow very just and square in their dealings

6. If no comfort in humiliation, they turn moral men.

Man's perdition is of himself.

with men, and exceeding ſtrict in the duties of the firſt Table toward *God*, as *faſting*, *prayer*, *hearing*, *reading*, *obſerving the Sabbath*: and thus the *Phariſees* lived, and hence they are called, *The ſtrict Sect of the Phariſees*. Take heed you miſtake me not; I ſpeak not againſt ſtrictneſs, but againſt reſting in it: *for, except your righteouſneſs exceed theirs, you ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. You ſhall find theſe men flie from baſe perſons and places, like the peſt-houſes, commend the beſt Books, cry down the ſins of the time, and cry againſt civil or moral men, (the eys ſees not it ſelf) and cry up zeal and forwardneſs. Talk with him about many moral duties that are to be done towards God or man, he will ſpeak well about the excellency and neceſſity of it, becauſe his trade and skill whereby he hopes to get his living and earn eternal life, lieth there: But ſpeak about Chriſt, and living by faith in him and from him, and bottoming the ſoul upon the promiſes, (pieces of Evangelical righteouſneſs) he that is very skilful in any point of controverſie is as ignorant almoſt as a beaſt when he is examined here. Hence, if Miniſters preach againſt the ſins of the time, they commend it for a ſpecial Sermon, (as it haply deſerves too;) but let him ſpeak of any ſpiritual, inward, ſoul-working points, they go away and ſay, He was in their judgment confuſed and obſcure, for their part they underſtood him not. Beloved, pictures are pretty things to look on, and that's all the goodneſs

of

of them: so these men are, (as Christ looked on and loved the natural young man in the Gospel) and that's all their excellency. You know, in *Noah's* Floud, all that were not in the Ark, though they did climb and get to the top of the tallest mountains, they were drowned: so labour to climb never so high in Morality, and the duties of both Tables, if thou goest not into God's Ark, the Lord Jesus Christ, thou art sure to perish eternally.

Man's perdition is of himself.

7. If they have no rest here in their *Morality*, they grow hot within, and turn marvellous zealous for good causes and courses, and there they stay, and warm themselves at their own fire: thus *Paul, Phil.* 3. 6. *was zealous*, and there rested. They will not live as many do, like Snails in their shells; but rather then they will be damned for want of doing, they are content to give away their estate, children, any thing almost, to get pardon for the sin of their soul, *Micah* 6. 7.

7. If no comfort in Morality, they turn zealous for good causes. *Rom.* 2. 10.

8. If they find no help from hence, but are forced to see and say, *When they have done all, they are unprofitable servants*, and they sin in all that which they do; then they rest in that which is like to *Evangelical obedience*, they think to please God by mourning for their failings in their goods duties, desiring to be better, and promising for the time to come to be so, and therein rest, *Deut.* 5. 29.

8. If no comfort from zeal in good causes, they turn to mourning for their failings.

9. If they feel a want of all these, then they dig within themselves for power to leave sin, power to be more holy and humble, and so think to work out themselves in time

9. If no comfort in their mourning for their failings, they seek for power in themselves to be more holy.

Man's perdition is of himself.

out of this estate; and so they dig for pearls in their own dunghils, and will not be beholden to the *Lord Jesus*, to live on him in the want of all. They think to set up themselves out of their own stock, without *Jesus Christ*, and so, as the Prophet *Hosea* speaks, *Hos.* 14. 3,4. think to save themselves *by their riding on horses*, (that is) *by their own abilities.*

10. If no comfort in themselves, they go to Christ like Hirelings, for their own ends.

10. If they feel no help here, then they go unto Christ for grace and power to leave sin and do better, whereby they may save themselves; and so they live upon Christ, that they may live of themselves; they go *unto* Christ, they get not *into* Christ, *Psalm* 78. 34, 25. like hirelings that go for power to doe their work, that they may earn their wages. A child of God contents himself with, and lives upon the Inheritanc it self the Lord in his free mercy hath given him. But now we shall see many poor Christians that run in the very road the Papists devoutly go to Hell in.

The confession of Papists in three particulars.

First, the Papist will confess his misery, that he is (and all men are) by nature a child of wrath, and under the power of sin and Satan. Secondly, they hold Christ is the only Saviour. Thirdly, that this Salvation is not by any righteousness in a Christ, but righteousness from a Christ, onely by giving a man power to doe, and then dipping mens doings in his bloud, he merits their life. Thus the wisest and devoutest of them profess, as I am able to manifest. Just so do many Christians live. First, they feel themselves full of sin, and are sometimes tired and weary of themselves for

their

their vile hearts, and they find no power to help themselves: Secondly, hereupon hearing that onely Christ can save them, they go unto Christ to remove those sins that tire them and load them, that he would enable them to doe better then formerly: Thirdly, if they get these sins subdued and removed, and if they find power to doe better, then they hope they shall be saved. Whereas thou mayest be damned, and go to the Devil at the last, although thou dost escape all the pollutions of the World, and that not from thy self and thy own strength, but from the knowledge of *Jesus Christ*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. I say, wo to you for ever if you die in this estate. It is with our Christians in this case as it is with the *Ivy*, which claspes and groweth about the Tree, and draws sap from the Tree, but it grows not *one* with the Tree, because it is not ingrafted into the Tree; so many a soul cometh to Christ, to suck juice from Christ to maintain his own berries, (his own stock of grace:) alass! he is but *Ivy*, he is no member or branch of this Tree, and hence he never grows to be one with Christ.

Man's perdition is of himself.

It is with many Christians as with *Ivy*, they get sap from Christ, but grow not one with Christ, because not ingrafted.

Secondly, Now the reasons why men rest in their duties are these.

2. Why men do rest in their good duties, *Reason* 1.

First, because it's natural to a man out of Christ to do so. *Adam* and all his posterity were to be saved by his doing, *Do this, and live*; work, and here is thy wages; win Life, and wear it: Hence all his posterity seeks to this day to be saved by *doing*; *Like father, like son.* Now to come out of all duties truly to

It is natural to say, *Doe this, and live.*

Man's perdition is of himself.

a Christ, hath not so much as a coat in *innocent*, much less *corrupted*, nature: hence men seek to themselves. Now as it is with a Bankrupt, when his *stock is spent*, and his *estate crackt*, before he will turn Prentice, or live upon another, he will turn Pedler of small wares, and so follow his old Trade with a less *stock*: so men naturally follow their old Trade of *Doing*, and hope to get their living that way; and hence having no experience of trading with Christ by *faith*, live of themselves. *Sampson*, when all his strength was lost, would go to shake himself as at other times: so when mens strength is lost, and God and Grace is lost, yet men will go and try how they can live by shifts and working for themselves still.

Reason 2. Ignorance of Christ's righteousness.

Secondly, because men are ignorant of *Jesus Christ* and his righteousness. Hence men cannot go unto him, because they see him not; hence they shift as well as they can for themselves by their duties, *John* 4.14. Men seek to save themselves by their own swimming, when they see no cable cast out to help them.

Reas. 3. Good duties the natural way of pleasing God.

Thirdly, because this is the easiest way to comfort the heart, and pacifie conscience, and to please God, as the soul thinks; because by this means a man goes no farther then himself.

Now in forsaking all duties, a soul goeth to Heaven quite out of himself, and there he must wait many a year, and that for a little, it may be. Now if a fainting man have *Aqua*

vitæ

vite at his bed's head, he will not knock up the shop-keeper for it. Men that have a Balsam of their own to heal them will not go to the Physitian. Man's perdition is of himself.

Fourthly, because by virtue of these duties a man may hide his sin, and live quietly in his sin, yet be accounted an honest man: as the whore in *Prov.* 7.15,16. having performed her vows, can intice without suspicion of men, or check of conscience: so the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* were horribly covetous, but their long prayers covered their deformities, *Matt.* 23.14. And hence men set their duties at a higher rate then they are worth, thinking *they* shall save them, because they are so usefull to them. Good duties, like new apparel on a man pursued with hue and cry of conscience, keep him from being known. *Reas.* 4. By good duties sin may be kept in.

Take heed of resting in duties. Good duties are mens *money*, without which they think themselves poor and miserable; but take heed that *you and your mony perish not together*, *Acts* 8.20. The paths to hell are but two. The first is the path of *Sin*, which is a dirty way. Secondly, the path of *Duties*, which (rested in) is but a clearer way. When the *Israelites* were in distress, *Judg.* 10.14. the Lord bids them go to the gods they served; so when thou shalt lie howling on thy death-bed, the Lord will say, go unto the *good prayers* and *performances* you have made, and the tears you have shed. Oh, they will be miserable comforters at that day. *Use.* Not to rest in good duties.

Object. But I think thou wilt say, No true Chri- *Object.*

Man's perdition is of himself.

Christian man hopes to be saved by his good works and duties, but onely by the mercy of God, and merits of Christ.

Answ. It is one thing to trust to be saved by *duties*, another thing to *rest* in duties. A man trusts unto them, when he is of this opinion, that onely good duties can save him: A man rests in duties, when he is of this opinion, that onely Christ can save him, but in his practice he goeth about to save himself. The wisest of the Papists are so at this day, and so are our common Protestants. And this is a great subtilty of the heart: that is, when a man thinks he cannot be saved by his good works and duties, but onely by Christ, he then hopeth, because he is of this opinion, that *when he hath done all, he is an unprofitable servant*, (which is onely an act or work of the judgment informed aright) that therefore, because he is of this opinion, he shall be saved.

Answ. Difference between trusting and resting in duties.

But because it is hard for to know when a man rests in duties, and few men find themselves guilty of this sin, which ruines so many, I will shew two things.

1. The Signs of a man's resting in duties.
2. The Insufficiency of all duties to save men; that so those that be found guilty of this sin may not go on in it.

I. Signs of mens resting in duties.

First, for the Signs whereby a man may certainly know when he rests in his duties, which if he do, (as few professors especially but they do) he perisheth eternally.

Sign 1.

First, Those that yet never saw they *rested in them*, they that never found it an hard matter

matter to *come out of their duties*. For it's most natural for a man to ſtick in them, becauſe nature ſets men upon *duties*; hence it's a hard matter to come out of reſting in duties: For two things keep a man from Chriſt.

Man's perdition is of himſelf.

1. *Sin.* 2. *Self.* Now as a man is broken off from *ſin*, by ſeeing and feeling it, and groaning under the power of it; ſo is a man broken from *himſelf*. For men had rather doe any thing then come unto Chriſt, there is ſuch a deal of *ſelf* in them. Therefore if thou haſt no experience, that at ſome time thou haſt reſted too much in thy duties, and then didſt groan to be delivered from theſe intanglements, (I mean not from the *doing* of them, this is *Familiſm* and profaneneſs, but from *reſting* in the bare performance of them) thou doſt rely upon thy *duties* to this day.

2 Things keep us from Chriſt.

2. Thoſe reſt in duties that prize the bare performance of *duties* wonderfully; for thoſe duties that carry thee out of thy ſelf unto Chriſt, make thee to prize Chriſt. Now tell me, doſt thou glory in thy ſelf? Now I am ſome-body: I was *ignorant*, *forgetful*, *hard-hearted*; now I underſtand and remember better, and can ſorrow for my ſins: If thou doſt reſt here, thy *duties* never carried thee farther then thy *ſelf*. Doſt thou think, after that thou haſt prayed with ſome life, now I have done very well? and now thou doſt verily think (meaning, for thy *duties*) the Lord will ſave thee, though thou never come to *Chriſt*, and ſayeſt, as he in another caſe, *Now I hope the Lord will do good to me, ſeeing I have*

Sign 2. A prizing of bare performance of duties.

got

Man's perdition is of himself.

got a Priest into my house, *Judg.* 17.13. Dost thou inhance the price of *Duties* thus, that thou dost dote on them? then I do pronounce from God, thou dost rest in them. *These things* (saith *Paul*) *I counted gain*, (that is, before his conversion to Christ, he prized them exceedingly;) but *now I account them loss*. And this is the reason why a child of God commonly after all his prayers, tears and confessions, doubts much of *God's love towards him*; whereas another man, that falleth short of him, never questions his estate: the first sees much rottenness and vileness in his best duties, and so judgeth meanly of himself; the other, ignorant of the vileness of them, prizeth them, and esteemeth highly of them, and setting his Corn at so high a price, he may keep them to himself; the Lord never accepteth them nor buyeth them at so high a rate.

Phil. 3. 8. Good duties must be counted loss in comparison of Christ.

Sign. 3. An insensibility of our own emptiness.

Thirdly, those that never came to be sensible of their *poverty* and utter *emptiness of all good*: for so long as a man hath a peny in his purse, that is, feels any good in himself, he will never come a-begging unto *Jesus Christ*, and therefore rests in *himself*. Now didst thou never feel thy self in this manner poor? *viz.* I am as Ignorant as any beast, as vile as any Devil: Oh Lord, what a nest & litter of sin and rebellion lurks in my heart! I once thought at least my heart and desires were good, but now I feel no spiritual life. Oh dead heart! I am the poorest, vilest, basest, and blindest creature that ever lived. If thou dost not thus feel thy self poor, thou never camest *out of thy state*

for

for when the Lord bringeth any man to Christ he brings him *empty*, that so he may make him beholden to *Christ* for every *farthing-token*.

Man's perdition is of himself.

Fourthly, those that gain no *Evangelical righteousness by duties* rest in *duties*; I say, *Evangelical righteousness*, that is, more prizing of acquaintance with, desire after, loving and delighting in union with the Lord *Jesus Christ*: for a moral man may grow in *Legal righteousness*, (as the stony and thorny-ground, *seed* sprang up and increased much, and came near unto maturity) and yet *rest in duties* all this while. For as 'tis with Tradesmen, they *rest* in their buying and selling, though they make no gain of their Trading: now *Jesus Christ* is a *Christian's gain*, *Phil.* 1. 21. and hence a child of God asks himself after *Sermon*, after *Prayer*, after *Sacrament*, *What have I gained of Christ? Have I got more knowledge of Christ, more admiring of the Lord Jesus?* Now a carnal heart, that *rests in his duties*, asketh onely what he hath done, as the *Pharisee*, *I thank God I am not as other men*, *I fast twice a week*, *I give alms*, and the like; and thinks verily he shall be saved, because he *prays*, and because he *hears*, and because he *reforms*, and because he *sorrows* for his sins, that is, *not* because of the gaining of Christ in a duty, but because of his naked performance of the duty: And so they are like that man that I have heard of, that thought verily he should be rich, because he had got a Wallet to beg: so men, because they perform duties, think verily

Isa. 66. 2. *Sign* 4. A Legal, not an Evangelical righteousness.

Man's perdition is of himself.

rily they shall be saved. No such matter; let a man have a Bucket made of Gold, doth he think to get water because he hath a Bucket? No, no; he must let it down into the well, and draw up water with it: so must thou let down all thy duties into Christ, and draw light and life from his fulness, else, though thy duties be Golden duties, thou shalt perish without *Christ*. When a man hath bread in his Wallet, and got water in his Bucket, he may boldly say, So long as these last I shall not famish: so mayest thou say, when thou hast found and got Christ in the performance of any duty, So long as Christ's life lasteth I shall live; as long as he hath any wisdom or power, so long shall I be directed and enabled in well-doing.

We must let all our duties down into Christ, and draw from his fulness.

Sign 5. When our duties make us sin more boldly.

Fifthly, if thy duties make thee sin more boldly, thou dost then *rest in duties*: for those duties which carry a man out of *himself* unto *Christ* ever fetch power against sin; but duties that a man rests in arm him and fence him in his sin, *Isaiah* 1. 14. A Cart that hath no wheels to rest on can hardly be drawn into the dirt; but one that hath wheels cometh loaded through it: so a child of God that hath no wheels, *no duties to rest upon*, cannot willingly be drawn into sin: but another man, though he be loaden with sin, (even sometimes against his conscience) yet having duties to bear him up, goeth merrily on in a sinful course, and makes no bones of sin. When we see a base man revile a great Prince, and strike him, we say, Surely he durst not do it, unless

unleſs he had ſome body to bear him out in it, that he reſts and truſts unto: ſo when we ſee men ſin againſt the great God, we conceive, Certainly they durſt not doe it, if they had not ſome duties to bear them out in it, and to encourage them in their way, that they truſt unto.

Man's perdition is of himſelf.

For, take a *prophane man*, what makes him *drink, ſwear, cozen, game, whore?* Is there no God to puniſh? Is there no Hell hot enough to torment? Are there no plagues to confound him? Yes: why ſinneth he ſo then? Oh, he prayeth to God for forgiveneſs, and ſorroweth and repents in ſecret, (as he ſaith) and this bears him up in his lewd pranks.

To ſin, and ask God forgiveneſs, is but mean ſatisfaction.

Take a moral man, he knows he hath his failings and his ſins, as the beſt have, and is overtaken ſometimes as the beſt are; why doth he not remove theſe ſins then? He confeſſeth them to God every morning when he riſeth; why is he not more humbled under his ſin then? The reaſon is; he conſtantly obſerveth *morning* and *evening prayer*, and then he craves forgiveneſs for his failings, by which courſe he hopes he makes his peace with *God*; and hence he ſinneth without fear, and ariſeth out of his falls into ſin without ſorrow. And thus they ſee and maintain their ſins by their *duties*, and therefore *reſt in duties*.

Sign 6. When we ſee not our vile hearts by our duties.

Sixthly, thoſe that ſee little of their vile hearts by *duties* reſt in their duties: for if a man be brought nearer to Chriſt, and to the light, by *duties*, he will ſpie out more *moats*; for

Man's perdition is of himself.

for the more a man participates of *Christ, his health and life*, the more he feeleth the *vileness* and *sickness* of sin. As *Paul*, when he *rested in duties* before his Conversion, before that the *Law* had humbled him, *he was alive*, that is, he thought himself *a sound man*, because his *duties* covered his sins, like fig-leaves. Therefore ask thine own heart, if it be troubled sometimes for sin, and if after thy *praying* and *sorrowing* thou dost grow well, and thinkest thy self safe, and feelest not thy self more vile: If it be thus, I tell thee, thy duties be but fig-leaves to cover thy nakedness, and the Lord will find thee out, and unmask thee one day, and wo to thee if thou dost perish here.

Rom. 7. *Paul*, when he rested in duties, thought he was alive, when he was dead.

2. The insufficiency of any duty to save a man appears in three things.

Secondly, therefore behold the *Insufficiency of all duties to save us*; which will appear in these three things, which I speak, that you may learn hereafter never to *rest in duties*.

1. Our best duties are sinful.

First, consider *thy best duties* are tainted, poisoned, and mingled with some sin, and therefore are most odious in the eyes of an *holy God*, (nakedly and barely considered in *themselves*.) For if the best Actions of *God's people* be filthy, as they come from them, then, to be sure, all wicked men's *actions* are much more filthy and polluted with sin: but the first is true, *All our righteousness is as filthy rags*: for as the fountain is, so is the stream; but the fountain of all *good actions* (that is, the *heart*,) is mingled partly with sin, partly with grace; therefore every action participates of some sin, which sins are daggers at

Isai 6.6. Man's righteousness like rags.

God's

God's heart, even when a man is praying and begging for his life; therefore there is no *hope* to be saved by *duties*.

Man's perdition is of himself.

Secondly, suppose thou couldst perform them without sin, yet thou couldst not hold out in doing, *Isaiah* 40.6. *All flesh and the glory thereof is but grass.* So thy best actions would soon wither, if they were not perfect: and if thou canst not *persevere* in performing all *duties perfectly*, thou art for ever undone, though thou shouldst do so for a time. Live like an Angel, shine like a Sun, and at thy last gasp have but an idle thought, commit the least sin, that one rock will sink thee down even in the Haven, though never so richly laden; one sin, like a pen-knife at the heart, will stab thee; one sin, like a little fire-stick in the thatch, will burne thee; one act of *treason* will hang thee; though thou hast lived never so devoutly before, *Ezek.* 18. 24. for it's a crooked life, when all the parts of the line of thy life be not straight before Almighty God.

2. The glory of imperfect actions is but as grass.

Gal. 3. 10.

Thirdly, suppose thou shouldst *persevere*, yet it's clear thou hast sinned grievously already; and dost thou think thine *obedience* for the time to come can satisfie the *Lord* for all those rents behind, for all those sins past? as, can a man that payes his rent honestly every year, satisfie hereby for the old rent not paid in twenty years? All thy *obedience* is a new debt, which cannot satisfie for debts past. Indeed *men* may forgive wrongs and debts, because they be but finite; but the least sin is an infinite evil, and therefore God

3. Our good actions will not satisfie for sin past.

Mans perdition is of himself.

God cannot remain God, and forgive sin without satisfaction.

must be satisfied for it. Men may remit debts, and yet remain men; but the Lord having said, *The soul that sinneth shall die*, and his truth being himself, he cannot remain *God*, if he forgive it without *satisfaction*. Therefore *duties* are but *rotten crutches* for a soul to rest upon.

Object. To what end are our duties?

But to what end should we use any *duties*? cannot a man be saved by his good *prayers*, nor *sorrows*, nor *repentings*? what should we pray any more then? let us cast off all *duties*, if all are to no purpose to save us: as good play for nothing as work for nothing.

Answ. Good duties not to be cast off, but our resting upon them.

Though thy good duties cannot save thee, yet thy bad works will damn thee. Thou art therefore *not* to cast off the duties, but thy *resting* in these duties: thou art not to cast them *away*, but to cast them *down* at the feet of Jesus Christ, as they did their Crowns, *Rev.* 4. 10, 11. saying, If there be any good or graces in these *duties*, it's thine, Lord: for 'tis the Prince's favour that exalts a man, not his own gifts; they came from *his good pleasure*.

Object.

But thou wilt say, To what end should I perform duties, if I cannot be saved by them?

Answ: We are to perform good duties for three ends.

For these three ends.

1. To carry thee to the *Lord Jesus* the onely Saviour, *Heb.* 7. 25. he onely *is able to save* (not *duties*) *all that come unto God* (that is, in the use of means) *by him*. Hear a Sermon, to carry thee to Jesus Christ: Fast and pray, and get a full tide of *affections* in them, to carry thee to the *Lord Jesus Christ*, that is,

2. To bring us to Christ.

to

to get more *love* of him, more acquaintance with him, more union with him: so sorrow for thy sins, that thou mayest be more fitted for Christ, that thou mayest prize Christ the more: use thy duties as *Noah's Dove* did her wings, to carry thee to the *Ark of the Lord, Jesus Christ*, where onely there is rest. If she had never used her wings, she had fallen into the waters: so if thou shalt use *no duties*, but cast them all off, thou art sure to perish. Or as it is with a poor man that is to go over a great water for a treasure on the other side, though he cannot fetch the boat, he calls for it; and though there be no treasure in the boat, yet he useth the boat to carry him over to the treasure: so Christ is in Heaven, and thou on earth, he doth not come to thee, and thou canst not go to him; now call for a boat: though there is no grace, no good, no salvation, in a *pithless duty*, yet use it to carry thee over to the Treasure, the *Lord Jesus Christ*. When thou comest to *hear*, say, Have over, Lord, by this Sermon; when thou comest to *pray*, say, Have over, Lord, by this prayer to a *Saviour*. But this is the misery of people, like foolish lovers, when they are to woe for the Lady, they fall in love with her Hand-maid that is onely to lead them to her: so men fall in love with, and dote upon, their own duties, and rest contented with the naked performance of them, which are onely Hand-maids to lead the soul unto the Lord Jesus Christ.

Man's perdition is of himself.

Good duties are the means by which we come to Jesus Christ.

2. Good duties are evidences of God's love to us in Christ.

Secondly, use duties as evidences of *God's ever-*

Man's perdition is of himself.

everlasting love to you when you be in Christ: for the graces and duties of *God's people*, although they be not causes, yet they be tokens and pledges of salvation to one in Christ; they do not save a man, but accompany and follow such a man as shall be saved, *Heb.* 6.9. Let a man boast of his *joyes*, *feelings*, *gifts*, *spirit*, *grace*, if he walks in the commission of any one sin, or the omission of any one known duty, or in the slovenly ill-favoured performance of duties, this man, I say, can have no assurance without flattering himself, 2 *Pet.* 1.8,9,10. *Duties* therefore being *evidences and pledges of salvation*, use them to that end, and make much of them therefore. As a man that hath a fair evidence for his *Lordship*, because he did not purchase his *Lordship*, will he therefore cast it away? no, no; because it is an *evidence* to assure him that it is his own, and so to defend him against all such as seek to take it from him, he will carefully preserve the same: So because *duties do not save thee*, wilt thou cast away *good duties*? no, for they are evidences (if thou art in Christ) that the *Lord* and *mercy* is thine own. Women will not cast away their *Love-tokens*, although they are such things as did not purchase or merit the love of their Husbands; but because they are tokens of his love, therefore they will keep them safe.

3. Good duties honour God being used.

That God, *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, may be honoured by the performance of these *duties*, therefore use them. Christ shed his bloud that he might purcase unto himself

selfe *a people zealous of good works*, Tit. 2. 14. not to save our soules by them, but to *honour him*. Oh, let not the bloud of Christ be shed in vain. *Grace* and *good duties* are a Christian's Crown; it is sin onely makes a man base. Now shall a King cast away his Crown, because he bought not his Kingdome by it? No, because it is his *ornament* and *glory* to wear it when he is made a King. So I say unto thee, it is better that Christ should be honoured then thy soul saved: and therefore perform duties, because they honour the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus *use thy duties*, but *rest not in duties*; nay, go out of *duties*, and match thy soul to the Lord Jesus; take him for better and for worse; so live in him and upon him all thy days.

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Fourthly, by reason of man's *head-strong Presumption*, or false faith, whereby men seek to save themselves by *catching hold on Christ*, when they see an insufficiency *in all duties* to help them, and themselves unworthy of mercy: for this is the last and most dangerous rock that these times are split upon. Men make a bridge of their own to carry them to *Christ*: I mean, they look not after faith wrought by an omnipotent power, which *the eternal Spirit* of the *Lord Jesus* must *work* in them; but they content themselves with a faith of their *own forging* and *framing*: and hence they think verily and believe, that Christ is their *sweet Saviour*, and so doubt not but they are safe, when there is no such matter; but even as dogs they snatch away childrens

IV. The fourth general Reason of man's ruine.

Eph. 1. 19.

Man's perdition is of himself.

dren's bread, and shall be shut out of doors (out of Heaven hereafter for ever) for their labour.

All men are of this opinion, *That there is no salvation but by the merits of Jesus Christ*; and because they hold fast this opinion, therefore they think they hold fast *Jesus Christ* in the hand of faith, and so perish by catching at their own catch, and hanging on their own fancy and shadow. Some others catch hold of Christ before they come to feel the want of faith and ability to believe, and catching hold on him, (like dust on a man's coat, whom God will shake off; or like burs and briers cleaving to ones garment, which the Lord will trample under foot) now say they, they thank God they have got comfort by this means, and though God killeth them, yet they will trust unto him, *Micah* 3. 11.

Men eve no salvation but by Christ, and so think they hold Christ in the hand of faith.

Easier converting a man in *India* then in *England*.

It is in this respect a harder matter to convert a man in *England* then in the *Indies*; for there they have no such shifts and sorts against our Sermons, as to say they believe in Christ already, as most amongst us do; we cannot rap off mens fingers from catching hold on Christ before they are fit for him; like a company of Thieves in the street, you shall see an hundred hands scrambling for a Jewel that is fallen there, that have least, nay, nothing to doe with it. Every man saith almost, *I hope Christ is mine, I put my whole trust and confidence in him*; and will not be beaten from this: What, must a man despair? must not a man trust unto Christ? Thus men will

will hope and trust, though they have no ground, no graces to prove they may lay hold and claim unto Christ. This *hope* scared out of its wits damns thousands; for I am perswaded, if men did see themselves *Christless creatures* as well as *sinful creatures*, they would cry out, *Lord what shall I doe to be saved?*

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This faith is *a precious faith*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 2. *Precious things* cost much, and we set them at a high rate: if thy faith be so, it hath cost thee many a prayer, many a sob, many a salt tear. But ask most men how they came by their faith in Christ, they say, Very easily. When the Lion sleeps, a man may lie and sleep by it; but when it awakens, wo to that man that doth so: so while God is silent and patient, thou mayest befool thy self with thinking thou dost trust unto God; but wo to thee when the Lord appears in his wrath, as one day he will; for, by virtue of this false faith, men *sinning* take *Christ* for a *dish-clout*, to wipe them clean again, and that is all the use they have of this faith. They sin indeed, but they trust unto Christ for his mercy, and so lie still in their sins. God will revenge with bloud, and fire, and plagues, this horrible contempt from Heaven.

A precious faith got at a high rate.

While God is silent, we may think we trust in him; but when he appears in his wrath, it will be otherwise.

Hence many of you trust to Christ, as the *Apricock*-tree, that leans against the wall, but it's fast *rooted* in the earth: so you lean upon *Christ* for salvation, but you are *rooted* in the world, *rooted* in your pride, *rooted* in your filthiness still. Wo to you if you perish in

Man's perdition is of himself.

this estate, God will hew you down as fewel for his wrath, what-ever mad hope you have to be saved by *Christ*. This therefore I proclaim from the God of *Heaven*.

Two things observable.

1. You that never felt your selves as unable to believe as a dead man to raise himself, you have as yet no faith at all.

2. You that would get faith, first must feel your inability to believe; and fetch not this slip out of thine own Garden; it must come down from Heaven to thy soul, if ever thou partakest thereof.

Other things I should have spoken on this large subject, but I am forced here to end abruptly. The *Lord* lay not this sin to their charge who have *stopt my mouth*, *labouring to with-hold the truth in unrighteousnes*. And blessed be the good God, who hath stood by his unworthy servant thus long, enabling him to lead you so far, as to shew you the rocks and dangers of your passage to another World.

FINIS.

THE SAINTS JEWEL,

SHEWING

How to apply the Promise.

AND THE

SOULS INVITATION

UNTO

JESUS CHRIST.

In Two Sermons Preached by

THOMAS SHEPPARD.

For the Promise is to you, and unto your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call, Acts 2. 29.

Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me, Rev. 3. 20.

LONDON, Printed for *Robert Horne*. 1672.

To the Reader.

READER; The body may as well subsist without the soul, as the soul can without a Promise: and as the body is not wearied with bread, (being the staffe of life) though it hath it every day for nourishment; so likewise the fainting hungry soul can never be cloyed with feeding upon the promises. For which cause I have also adventured this little Sermon, not doubting but it may reap its due fruit from those whose hearts are rightly affected; which God granting, I shall account my labour abundantly requited. Farewell.

THO. SHEPPARD.

THE

THE SAINT's JEWEL:

Shewing how to apply *The Promise.*

2 Cor. 7. 1.

Having these Promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

THE Apostle *Paul* in the former Chapter exhorteth the *Corinthians* to beware of unequal yoking themselves with Unbelievers: and he gives a double argument for it; one from the Unequalness of it, the other from the Promises, as in my Text, *Having these promises.*

In these words are three parts.

First, a loving Appellation, in these words, *Having these Promises, dearly beloved.* 1.

A gracious Exhortation, *Let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* 2.

An argument for Instigation, or Motive that he useth to press his exhortation, which is from the nature of the Promise. 3.

That

That which is in the last part of the division is first in order of the words, and therefore we will look upon the words as they lie in order: and so from the last part and first words I shall handle this Doctrine;

Doct. *That God made many Promises unto his people.*

I am come to you this day, not to set out unto you the excellency of Wit or Learning, or the Creature, but the excellency of a naked Promise, according to that 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promises.*

Now all the Promises of God unto his people are such as concern the body, or the body and the soul. Those that concern the body are with this limitation, that is, so far as concerns God's glory and the good of our souls: but for the body and soul consider that place, Psal. 84. 11. *For the Lord is a Sun and a shield: the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good will he withhold from them that live uprightly.*

Reasons why God hath made Promises to his People.

I come to the Reasons why God hath thus made many Promises unto his people; and they are three.

Reason 1. The first Reason is this, That his people might have a fit object for their faith to lay hold upon: for if you look upon all the creatures in the World, you shall not find in all of them joyntly, or any of them apart, a fit object for faith to work upon, or be satisfied in. It is with faith as with a poor woman that hath a child, and hath nothing in the World to give it; she takes the child at her back, and goeth from door to door, and what she getteth

getteth she giveth to the child; so faith takes the soul, and carrieth it to Promise after Promise, and what-ever she finds there, she gives it to the soul.

The second reason why God hath made many Promises unto his people is, That they may have a ground of comfort; for as it is the object of their faith, so it is the ground of their comfort; for all other things of this World cannot profit or comfort the believing soul: as suppose we should go to friends for comfort, it may be they want comfort for themselves, and so are unfit to comfort us; or it may be they will not comfort us; or it may be they are a great way off, and so cannot doe it; or perhaps though able, and sometimes willing, yet they are mutable in their comforts, so as though at one time they are willing, and do comfort us, yet another time they fail us: But Christ, to whom the soul is led by the Promise, not onely hath comfort, and is able to comfort us, but he is willing also to give comfort to us, who knoweth our wants, *and is near to all that call upon him in truth*, and also he is immutable in his comforts. And were the creature a sufficient ground of comfort to God's people, then to want the creature were a sufficient ground of misery to them: But a man may want health, wealth, liberty, and the like, and yet through and in Christ his soul may have satisfying comfort: but if he want Christ, though he hath a fulness of the creature, he is most miserable, and without all satisfying comfort. The Promise

Reason 2.

Psal. 145. 18.

miſe onely is able to afford comfort to the ſoul in health, in ſickneſs, in life, and in death.

Reaſon 3. The third Reaſon why God hath made many Promiſes unto his people is, That they may become mutual comforters one of another, by having ſomewhat by experience from a Promiſe, wherewith they may be enabled to comfort others: ſo that you may ſee the Promiſe is not given to comfort our ſelves with onely, but alſo one another.

Uſe 1. Of Trial. Now for Uſe. Is it ſo, that God hath made many Promiſes unto his people? let us try our ſelves, whether we have any right to the Promiſes or no. I will name but one Note, that you may the better remember it, and it is a true one, for you ſhall find it in Scripture: *But the Scripture hath concluded all under ſin, that the promiſe by faith in Jeſus Chriſt might be given to them that believe.* So that you may ſee it is to them, and to them onely, that believe. He that can exerciſe faith in the Promiſe hath right to the Promiſe: *For ye walk by faith and not by ſight.*

Gal. 3 22.

2 Cor. 5. 7.

If Chriſtians be in affliction, and ſee that it doth them good, then it is eaſie to believe that promiſe which God hath made, *All things ſhall work together for the good of them that love God.* But to believe this Promiſe, when we cannot ſee any good come of affliction, that is to believe by faith, and not by ſight: but when we can ſee no good come by affliction, but find our ſelves more dead and dull, and alſo God to frown upon us, and yet we truſt

Rom. 8. 28.

in

in God, and believe the Promise, and stay our souls upon God's Word; this is to live by faith, as we are commanded, *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust on the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.* Faith maketh things absent to be present, and maketh the Promise good to us, though things seem to thwart the Promise never so much. *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen* with the eye of sense. As *Abraham* believed against hope, that he should have a child, according as God had promised: so must we trust God upon a naked promise; that if health should be gone, or wealth, liberty, strength, friends, yea life it self almost gone, and God seem to be gone, and Hell to be threatned, yet still to trust in God, and believe: this is to live by faith, and comfort is in the Promise for all such. But I speak now to God's people.

Isai. 50. 10.

Heb. 11. 1.

Rom. 4. 18.

Use 2. Of comfort to the godly.

The second Use of this Doctrine is, That seeing God hath made many Promises unto his people, it is a ground of comfort unto them all, that though they go up and down sad, as if they were the worst people in the World, yet have they the onely cause to rejoyce, and they onely in all the World. For here is comfort against all their sins, God hath promised to doe them away; *I am he that blotteth out thy sins for mine own name's sake.* Comfort thy self, Christ is thine; *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine.* If therefore there be enough

Isai. 43. 25.

enough in Christ's merits, hold up thy head, and take comfort to thy self.

Object. Oh but, saith the poor soul, I find sin prevail, and how can I then be comforted?

Answ. I answer, look into that place of Scripture, Mic. 7. 18, 19, 20. *I will subdue your iniquities, and cast your sins in the midst of the Sea*; and in the twentieth verse you may see the oath of God, for the truth and mercy of the Promise was gone forth before.

Object. But saith the soul, The Devil will be busie with me where-ever I go, and how can I be chearfull?

Answ. Rom. 16. 20. I answer, God hath said it, *I will tread down Satan under your feet shortly.* Comfort thy self in this, though Satan may trouble thee for a time, yet thou shalt have him under thy feet shortly.

Object. Oh but, again saith the soul, I shall meet with abundance of opposition in the World, and I am not able to make my party good, and how can I then rejoyce?

Answ. Prov. 11. 21. I answer, Flee thou to the Promise against that also, as where it is said, *Though hand joyn in hand*, &c. Though men joyn themselves together, and strike hands, even with the Devil, against God's children, yet shall they not overcome them.

Object. But, alas! saith a poor soul, I am in present want of outward comfort, and how should I be comfortable in such a condition?

I answer, It may be God dealeth with thee in this, as a mother with her children, who takes away the victuals from the children for

for a while, and puts it in the Cupboard, but afterwards she giveth it them again. So sometimes God taketh away these outward things, and he locketh them up for a while in the Cupboard, which is in the Promise, and when he sees it best for us, he giveth it us again. And thus he did with *Job*, he took away all his outward comforts, and left him so poor, as it is a proverb at this day (As poor as *Job*:) but after a while, God did not only restore unto him his former comforts, but gave him double. And this was written for thy comfort, and the strength of thy patience: comfort thy self therefore; happiness is above the creature. Job 1. 15. &c.

But I shall meet with many mocks and reproaches in the World. *Object.*

Answ. Let us comfort our selves against this with God's Promises: let us do as the covetous man in the Poet, who being mocked as he went in the streets, went home and looked in his Closet, and there seeing his bags of gold, rejoyced in his wealth, and scorned all their reproaches: so when we are mocked and scorned of men of the World, let us look into the Bible, and we shall find bags of Promises, true treasure, and therein let us rejoyce. *Answ.*

But it may be the poor soul will say, Alas! I cannot go to God by prayer to fetch comfort; or if I do pray, it is with so much coldness and deadness, as I cannot believe I shall obtain any thing. *Object.*

I answer, though it be so, yet believe, and *Answ.*

thou shalt have thy desire: though it may be thou canst but chatter, and though others hearing thee regard it not, yet God will say, let me hear thee; and as a father loves to hear his child prattle, though others regard it not, so God loveth to hear his Children pray.

Object. But Oh, I am afraid of death, and that taketh away all my joy and comfort.

Answ. I answer, thou mayest comfort thy self against that, yea & make death it self a ground of comfort and joy to thy self. If a child be at board from his father's house, though he be at play with his fellows, yet if he see horse and man come to fetch him, he is glad, and leaves his play and companions to go home to his father willingly: so here we are at board in the World, and we are at play, as it were, among the Creatures; but when death comes, which is as horse and man, we should be willing to go to our Father's house, which is best of all.

Object. But I am afraid, if suffering times should come, I should never be able to stand out.

Answ. If God call thee to sufferings, he will give thee grace suitable to thy condition, *He will*

1 Cor. 13. 10. *not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.*

Object. But, alas! I am afraid I shall fall away from God, and the continual fear thereof doth take away all my comfort.

Answ. *Answer.* None can pluck thee out of Christ's hands, neither Sin nor Devil. She

were

were a cruel mother that would cast her child into the fire: Christ must do so, if thou shouldst go to Hell; yea more, if that should be so, he should rend a member from himself, for he is thy head, and thou art one of his members: Therefore for thy comfort know this cannot be; the Lord saith, *I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good.* But you may say perhaps, I shall turn from him; see therefore what followeth in the same verse, *I will put my fear into their hearts, and they shall not depart from me.* The perpetuity of God's love to his.

This is good news, it may be the poor creature will say, if I had right to the Promise; but, alas! I cannot believe, and take a naked Promise. *Object.*

Ans. Dost thou desire to believe and to have Christ, and canst thou say thus? If it were possible Heaven and Christ could be separated, I would rather have Christ without Heaven, then Heaven without Christ; then comfort thy self, for God hath promised, *I will give to him that thirsteth of the water of life freely.* *Answ.*

But this is a hard matter, and I cannot say I truly desire Christ on such terms as I should. *Object.*

But is it a grief to thy heart that thou canst not deny thy self, and desirest thou, rather then be seperated from Christ, to close with Christ even upon any terms? Is it thy burthen because thou canst not desire to believe as thou shouldest? then comfort thy self, *God will accept the will for the deed* in this case. *Answ.* 2 Cor. 8. 12.

Object. But the soul objecteth and saith, Alas! I am so far from being grieved as I ought, that I rather find a heart that will not grieve and mourn for sin, I cannot find breakings of heart for it.

Answ. For thy comfort I will come one step lower to thee; Hast thou any will to it? Mark this place; if any place in the whole Scripture be for thee, here it is in the last words of this verse; *And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.*

Rev. 22. 17.

But it may be the wicked will say, I will have Christ: but stay; not every one that saith so shall have Christ: but art thou willing to part with thy sins, and it may be to part with health, wealth, liberty, friends, yea and your own life also? What say you? are you willing upon these terms?

Object. But the poor soul saith again, I fear I shall never do this. But art thou willing that

Answ. Christ should make thee willing, and pitch thee upon a Promise, and should hold thee there? If thou canst find these things, then comfort thy self, for thou hast right unto God's Promises.

Use 3. The third Use is; Seeing God hath made many Promises unto his people, this is Terrour to the wicked. Here are many in this Congregation to whom I have not spoken one word in the last Use of Comfort: now God sends other news to you, therefore put it not off from you. If I prove not what I say, by Scripture, believe me not. What I have said for the comfort of Gods people, I must say the contrary unto you.

Of terrour to the wicked.

First,

First, as God's children have their names written in God's Book; so you have your names written also, but it is in the black Book of God's wrath. 1.

Secondly, as God's children have a mark set on their foreheads; so there is a mark set on you, but it is a woful one: for though I judge you not, yet I am perswaded the Devil hath set his black mark with a brand from Hell on some of you: yea, a man may gather from your very faces almost what some of you are; but the day of judgment will fully discover you all. But in the mean time know this, whosoever you are that are in your natural condition, you are under God's curse; as it is, *If any shall hear the words of this curse, and bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of my heart, &c. Then the Lord will not spare him, but the anger of the Lord and his jealousie shall smoke against that man, and all the curses of this book shall be upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under Heaven, &c.* Also, *I will heap up mischief upon you, and I will send mine Arrows upon you.* Oh what a heavy thing is this! I pray you consider sadly; Not to have right to Gods Promises, is the condition of a man that is curfed and miserable in his life, at his death, and after his death. 2. Men in their natural condition are under the curse. Deut. 29. 19, 20. Deut. 32. 23.

You rich Gentlemen and Gentlewomen, give me leave to speak to you; I pray you consider thus much, if you have not right to Gods Promises, the curse of God is stamped

upon every croſs and penny, and upon every thing you have. See but this place, *I have curſed your bleſſings, ſaith the Lord*: as if he ſhould have ſaid, though I have given plenty of Corn and Money, and other things, yet they are to you but as curſes, and is not this a very ſad thing? Give me leave to deal plainly: it is as if a man had but two pence in all the world, and he ſhould go and buy a Halter with it, to hang himſelf; yea farther, all that thou haſt in this condition is but as if thou ſhouldſt twiſt a cord together to hang thy ſoul in Hell. And to you of the poorer ſort, that have not a right to the Promiſe, you are in a miſerable condition, for you are both miſerable here and hereafter alſo. *Iſrael hath not returned to him that ſmote them, neither do they ſeek unto the Lord; therefore the Lord will cut off from them both head and tail, branch and ruſh in one day.* Again, whatſoever you do in your calling is accurſed unto you; yea, your praying, reading, hearing, faſting and mourning, all is ſin: for, *The ſacrifice of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord.*

Mal. 2, 3. The bleſſings of the wicked are curſes.

Iſa. 9. 13, 14.

Prov. 15. 8.

Object. But if it be ſo, may theſe wicked men ſay, that our beſt duties are ſin, why ſhould we perform any duties, either praying, hearing, or the like?

Anſw. In anſwer to this, know for certain, whiles thou art in this condition, thou art in a bad condition, for every thing you do is ſin. *Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled & unbelieving, nothing is pure,*

Tit. 1. 15.

but

but even their minds and consciences are defiled. So that to you, to perform duty is sin, or not to perform duty is sin: but yet omit not duty; for though in performing duty thou sinnest, yet not to perform duty is a double sin.

To perform duty, whiles thou art in thy natural condition, is sin for the manner; because though thou mayest do the duty for substance, as pray, hear, confer, or the like, yet because thou dost want a principle of grace, nothing is done aright, and so it wanteth acceptance: but to neglect duty is a sin in regard of the matter and manner also; for as it is sinfulness it self not to do the duty, so it is sin to have the heart not rightly disposed for the manner of performance: it is with you as it was with the Lepers, they said among themselves thus, *Why sit we here till we die? If we say we will enter into the City, then the famine is in the City, and we shall die there; and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore let us come and fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.* So say thou with thy self, If I do duty, I sin; and if I do not perform duty, I commit a double sin: but I will go to duty: if God will save me, I shall live; if not, I can but perish. And for thy comfort, consider, it may be God will cast an eye of pity upon thee: thou art in the way, that is, the means God hath appointed to bring you home to Christ; but yet untill thy condition be changed, all thou doest is sin; for *The very thoughts of the*

To neglect duties is a double sin.

2 Kings 7. 3, 4.

Prov. 15. 26.

wicked are an Abomination unto the Lord.

But, Oh strange! though fire-brands out of Hell be spit in your faces, yet you are not affected. But it may be some of you think to do it when you are sick, or upon your death-bed: but it may be too late then, when God openeth and awakeneth your conscience; and if you be not awakened here, you shall be sure to be awakened in Hell. I remember I heard of a young Prodigal, who, when he was dying, looked on the fire and said, As that fire burneth there, so shall my soul burn in Hell. Another said on his death-bed, Oh that I might live, though it were but the life of a Toad. God is very careful to send his Angels for the godly: but for the wicked, the Devils stand ready at his beds-side to fetch him into Hell as soon as his breath goeth out of his body, and then he will cry out, Oh the time of mercy that I have had! but now it is past, the gate of mercy is shut, never more to be opened.

Death-bed repentance may be too late.

Object. But it may be yet some will say, Thanks be to God, I am not in Hell yet, and as long as there is life, there is hope.

Answ. Oh fearful! what hope still? read that place, and tremble in reading of it, *The Lord of that Servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the Hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Mat. 24 50, 51.

Oh consider this against the day of Judgment: it is a sad day for all such, when men

[illegible]

cy, and patience, and Christ shall plead against them, yea, *The dust of Ministers feet shall rise up against them.* Oh, but if so, then what will their condition be, when drops of blood and sweat shall rise up against them? yea more, the husband shall rejoyce to see the damnation of the wife. *The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth vengeance on the wicked,* because God hath gotten the glory of his enemies. Luke 10. 11. Luke 22. 44. Psal. 58. 10.

The Fourth Use is, an Exhortation to the godly first, and secondly to the wicked. *Use 4.* Of Exhortation.

In the first place to the godly, that complain they cannot lay hold on the Promise. Go to God to enable you; and that you may so do, 1.

Consider in the first place, that not to believe and lay hold on the Promise, is a sin of unbelief, *And he that believeth not is damned.* See the evil of this sin of Unbelief, in these particulars. John 3. 18. 2

First, *Hereby we grieve the holy Spirit of God whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption,* What a grievous thing is it for thee who desirest to be assured that the Promise is thine, that thou by unbelief shouldst grieve that holy Spirit which sealeth up the Promise to thy soul? See that promise, *Hear ye now, O house of David, is it a small thing for you to weary men, but you must weary my God also?* If a man promise to do another man a courtesie, and, after some delay, that man comes to him and saith, Will you do us you promised me? he saith, Yes: but saith he, Will 1. Eph. 4. 30. 2 Isa. 7. 13.

you

you indeed? and thus he pleadeth with him a whole day, and doth not believe him. Will not that exceedingly grieve his friend, who promised him so to do, and fully intended no less? Even so is it with all those that are God's people, and will not believe what God hath said unto them, but stand and plead with God two or three years or more. As those that believe, glorifie God: so those that will not come in, rob God of his honour and glory, and grieve him.

Belief glorifieth God.

2. It argueth a great deal of pride of heart in them, that they will not believe, because they have not what they would, but something they must have of themselves; like women that will not go to a Feast, because they have nothing to carry.

3. Here is a great deal of unthankfulness for all that God hath done for them, yea even for Christ himself. Where we love, we are very thankful: and where we desire to be thankful, we will be willing to take a kindness.

4. It argueth a great deal of impatience, when we will not wait in a way of believing upon the Promises of grace, and cheerfully attend God's leisure.

5. He that will not believe, gives God the lie: for *He that believeth, &c.* He that believeth not in every Ordinance he comes to, he maketh God a liar, because every Ordinance beareth record of Christ. 1 John 5. 10.

6. Not to believe, is a denying of God's power, for they will not trust God, especially in a great straight: and by this we may see what

what a many ſins even God's people may commit in this caſe.

Conſider again in the ſecond place what a ſafe thing it is to believe: I ſpeak to God's people. As Chirurgions, when they let a man blood, bid him look another way; ſo when the Devil letteth you blood, that is, holds you poring on your corruptions, look another way, I mean on God, and then you ſhall be ſafe from the Devil, and the World, and your own Corruptions. And that you may lay hold on the Promiſes of God, take heed of thoſe letts and impediments that might hinder you. 2. The ſafety of believing.

Sin is a lett, for it will wreſt the Promiſe out of our hands; *But your iniquities, &c.* 1. Iſa. 59. 2.

The ſecond impediment is our Doubting and wandring in our prayers; for, *We muſt pray, lifting up holy hands, &c.* 2. James 1. 6.

The third impediment to believing is ſlaviſh Fear, when we fear man more then God, contrary to that counſel, *Fear not their fear, nor be afraid, &c.* 3. Iſa. 8. 12.

The fourth lett is, when we lay down one thing that might afford us help, and draw our ſouls to God, and in the mean time take up another, which can no way help us; as when we lay down the Promiſe, and take up the Threatning. 4.

Fifthly, when we ſet our minds too much on the creature, or honours, and ſeek out own baſeneſs, or worldly pleaſures. 5.

In the next place, take theſe helps to lay hold on the Promiſe.

Labour

Labour to live by Faith in all streights and conditions, and by Faith fetch a supply for all your wants by the Promise from Christ.

Secondly, mark the Promises well, which are the ground of all comfort, and read them over often.

Do not flutter up and down from one Promise to another, but lie a great while on some one, and wring and squeeze it by meditation upon it.

Thirdly, apply the Promise aright; do not think it belongeth not to you, because you have not that presently which is proposed in it: you must know that God setteth not down the time when it shall be fulfilled.

Fourthly, we are to wait patiently and humbly under our present condition, untill God grant our desire: God's time is the best time.

Bless God for all his Promises, but especially when they are made good to us.

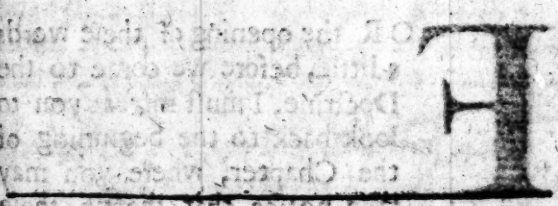
In the next place, to those that yet stand out, and have not closed with the Promise, I entreat you to come in to God, take his gracious offer, lay hold on the Promise: which that you may do, take heed of those things that will be lets, and hinder you.

Take heed of all sin, for the Lord saith, *Your sins have kept back good things from you.*

Take heed of setting your mind too much upon the creatures, for they will shut out God the Creator. Old men, do you come home to God; Young men, do you remember your Creator in the days of your youth;

God

God this day calleth you, it may be he will never call more. How many hath the Lord struck with death and ſickneſs? and how ſoon it may be any of our turns, I know not: ſickneſs is an unfit time to get Chriſt, and to make our peace with God. If you ſtand ſtill, you die; if you go on in ſin, you die: therefore turn from all your ſin, and come in and lay hold by faith on the Promiſe, that ſo ye may live, and this that I have ſpoken unto you may not be in vain.



THE SOULS INVITATION Unto Jesus Christ.

Cant. 5. 2. *Open unto me, my Sister, my Love, my Dove, my Undefiled; for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.*

FOR the opening of these words a little, before we come to the Doctrine, I must intreat you to look back to the beginning of the Chapter, where you may take notice, that though these words be the words of *Solomon*, yet they be spoken in the person of Christ to the Church, and so consequently to our poor souls. In the words you shall observe, the Lord Jesus Christ drawing near to our poor souls, desirous to make use of them, or to draw us aside from the creature and our selves, or whatsoever else we love, to have familiar acquaintance with himself.

Christ compared to a Suter.

The Lord in these words doth like a Suter, that is desirous to speed of the errand he comes for; he comes not so much to speak with

with the house, as with the party he loves in it: so it is with Christ, therefore he desires to get the soul alone, as a Suter doth, and there to make known his mind unto her; *I am come into my Garden, my Spouse*: and thus Christ doth draw the soul into his Ordinances, that there he might declare his mind unto her. When Christ hath her in his Garden, which is nothing but in the Ordinances, there he labours to commend himself unto her, what he is, and what he is worth: *I have gathered my myrrh with my spices: eat, O friends, drink: yea drink abundantly, O beloved.*

Thus Christ is just like a Suter, who when he comes to speak with one whom he loves, and hath drawn the party aside, he doth make known his parts unto her. Give me leave to use this similitude, because it is very fit.

I say, when a man hath got a woman aside, then he doth begin to brag and boast of himself, before he will break his mind unto her, and say, Wilt thou have me? then he doth discover his wealth, and wits, and parts, and the like unto her. So doth Christ: *I come into my Garden*; as if he should say, I have found this world before I came, a world of curses, briers, thorns and thistles; but now I will have you know I have purchased a Garden, and have brought the blessing of God into it; I have made the cursed world a Garden, and have enriched it with comforts for your sakes. *I am come into my Garden*: that is, by sin the Ordinances were nothing but bushes and briers to catch you in, so as thou art

By sin the Ordinances were briers and thorns.

art cursed if thou sinnest in the least measure; but now, saith Christ, I have places of blessings, a Garden, and there I purchased into it *myrrh with spices*, I have procured them with my bloud, *myrrh with spices, honey with the honey-comb*, and this have I done. Is there ought of worth in the world wherewith I have not enriched it? It was a place of briers and thorns before I adorned it. When Christ hath thus set forth his excellency in the way of his Ordinances, for all flows from him, then he doth draw and allure the creature; *Eat, O friends; drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved.*

Christ allureth the soul to embrace him.

Even as when a Suter hath said he is so much worth, he tells her he will give it her all, yea, and himself too: so saith Christ, This I am worth, and if you will have me, all this will I give you, and my self too; I have done all this for your sakes, that you might be my beloved. And yet see the Spouse doth not answer him fairly and demurely, but rather, out of pride and hypocrisie, giveth Jesus Christ a denyal, as it is, *I sleep, but my heart waketh*; and again, *I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on?* And though it be a common thing amongst men, to deny what they would have; yet to deal so with God it is a sin. But Christ will admit of no denial, but still continueth at the door knocking and saying, *Open unto me, my Sister, my Love, my Dove*, do not deny me, be not squeamish; for if this world be of a wilderness made a garden, I made it a garden for thee: and therefore, *Open unto*

Cant. 5. 1. Verse 3.

Verse 2.

me

me my dove, my undefiled, for my head is filled with the drops of the dew of the night.

My Love, I have taken all this pains day and night to make thee comely, for thee it was, and together with all these I will fasten my self upon thee; *therefore open, my love, &c.* what sweeter way could Christ use to draw her to himself then this? So much concerning the meaning of the words: so that you may see, the words be nothing else but an earnest suit of our Lord Jesus Christ, (like a sound lover) to the souls of poor creatures, that he might make a match with them.

That the Lord Jesus Christ desireth to be an earnest suiter, and a real speeder, between every poor soul and himself. *Doct.*

First, that the Lord is such an earnest suiter, and desireth to be a real speeder, it is evident in that I have already opened unto you. *Now I will sing a song to my beloved of his Vineyard.* Who do use to sing songs of love, but those who are suiters? who will a man be so familiar with, unless it be one whom he loveth? he saith he hath a vineyard. So that you may see he is an earnest suiter, and desires to be a real speeder. *What could he do more than he hath done?* a real speeder fain would he be. 1. Isai. 5. 1.

What hath not Christ done to provoke a creature to accept of him? *Greater love then this hath no man, to lay down his life for his friend.* It may be, if a man be in love with a Virgin, he will promise her many things, yet not his life; and if he tell her he will lose John 15. 13.

his life for her, he doth but complement: but Jesus Christ hath done so already, he hath not onely given his life for his friends, but for his very enemies: *Why will you die, O you house of Israel? as I live, saith the Lord, I desire it not.* What could the Lord do more to save poor souls from destruction? So I say, Christ is an earnest suter, and desires to be a real speeder; as appears by these following Signs.

Ezek. 18 31, 32.

Sign 1. Of Christ's love to his Spouse.

First, he is content to take the journey from Heaven to Earth. When a King is to be married; and doth but send over for the picture of some Princess, he demonstrates that he would marry; but when he goeth himself out of his own Land into another, it is a sure sign he purposeth to marry, if otherwise things miscarry not: so if Christ had sate in Heaven, and never come out, but sent for our nature thither; is it not a plain demonstration he would marry us? but if he would leave Heaven, his own Land, if he would leave Honour for Baseness, then it is a plain sign he would be a real speeder.

sign 2.

The second Sign that a man would be married is, when he doth set his best friends to plead for him. Hath the Lord Jesus a better friend then the Spirit of God? Hath not he made proffer of love to thy soul? If he hath, it is a sign and real manifestation he would marry thee. If Christ should send his Messengers or Embassadours from Heaven, and denial after denial is made, and yet would have no denial; it is a plain sign that he would

be

be a real speeder at thy hand. If a man should use all his friends to speak to a woman, is it not a plain sign that he were fond of her person? And so Christ doth send his Ministers, one of which is endued with more grace and wisdom then a thousand men; hath not Christ used the best Rhetorick to win us? hath not he spent their parts, affections and graces in the sute? and is it not plain then that Christ is not only an earnest suter, but desires to be a real speeder? So you may see he would fain make a match between thee and himself; he hath not only sent for the picture of thy nature, but came himself unto thee, and took thy nature upon him: so then Christ would fain be a real speeder with thy poor soul.

Object. Why should Christ Jesus be such an earnest suiter unto me, and desire so to speed? I am a poor worm, saith the soul; what can Christ find in me? my father was an *Amorite*, and my mother an *Hittite*; I have no grace to adorn me, and how is it possible that Christ should have me? Ezek. 16. 4.

Answ. Yea, it is possible that Christ will have thee; nay, it is not only possible, but Jesus Christ is already become a real Suter unto thee, as will appear by these following Reasons.

Reason 1. Of Christ's love to his Spouse. First, Christ hath taken a view of our persons, and likes them. If a man once sets his mind upon a woman, he will have her, no body shall scarce withstand him: I say, Christ hath seen us, and cast his love upon our nature.

ture. It is ſaid, he did in no wiſe take upon him the nature of Angels, but took upon him the nature of Man, even the ſeed of *Abraham*. Jeſus Chriſt would needs take upon him the nature of Man, to exalt it, and to honour man. It is ſaid, *God ſo loved the world*, God the Son as well as God the Father; God being in our nature cannot but pity our perſons. If he had taken the nature of the Devils upon him, he would have pitied them, and ſaved them: and now if we be never ſo vile, yet if we will ſtoop unto him, he hath that he deſireth.

Sampſon was a brave and valiant man, for he was a type of Chriſt; and you ſhall read, that he eſpied a woman amongſt the daughters of the *Philiſtims*, and that he pitched his heart upon her, and both his father and mother could not beat him off from her; but, Give me her (he ſaith) get her for me to wife, for I love her, I muſt have her. Then his father and mother ſaid unto him, What will you do with her? is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, but thou goeſt to the uncircumciſed *Philiſtims* for a wife? No, they could not prevail: Get her for me, for ſhe pleaſeth me well. And afterwards in the former part of the following Chapter you ſhall find, that when *Sampſon*'s wife was given to his companion, he went and caught three hundred Foxes, and took firebrands, and turning them tail to tail, he let them go into the ſtanding corn of the *Philiſtims*, and burnt up both the ſhocks,

Judg. 14. 1, 2.

Judg. 15, 1, 2, 3.

and

and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives. Though this was not commendable in *Sampson*, yet it was in *Christ*; for he may love us that were of this uncircumcised World, and adulterate from him, and spoil Principalities and Powers for us. Again, afterward *Sampson* espied an Harlot, and went in unto her, whose name was *Delilah*, who was but a trap to betray him to the *Philistims*, and, before he would lose her, he would suffer his Locks to be cut off; nay, he will lie, and part with the truth, and all for her: yet being betrayed, he avenged himself on the *Philistims*, and slew more at his death then he did in all his life. *Sampson* in this was a true type of Christ, that mighty *Nazarite*, who came down out of Heaven to be avenged of the Devil and sin. Christ, when he came, took a view of our persons, poor sinners and harlots, and after he had taken a view of our persons, coming in our nature he would love us: Yea, saith God, they will do nothing but abuse my Son, and wrong thee, O my Son, and break thy heart, and vex thy spirit. He hath seen *Delilah*, and cannot but love us, and come in unto us. If thou wilt have them, saith God, they will discover thy strength to the Devil: as if God should say, If thou wilt have them, they will deal as badly by thee as ever *Delilah* did by *Sampson*, they will betray thee into the hands of Satan, they will bring thee to the cross, and despitefully use thee, mock, and scoff, and spit on thee: and so they did.

Many will say, I will have such a one, though I go a begging with her: which is a very foolish resolution, for the which God will make thee smart. Well, but Christ saith, I will not lose them for suffering, let the worst come to the worst; for I love them, therefore I will have them.

Reason 2. Because the Lord Christ cannot perform the office of a Saviour, except he be married unto us; and if he doth not, why then he loseth his coming into the World, his bloud, death, and all his sufferings; he loseth all his miracles, all his preachings, prayers, and tears, and the like: and did you ever see or hear of any man that would lose a Sheep for half a peny-worth of Tart? Even so it standeth with Christ and us; he cannot save thee, except he doth marry thee.

A man that hath many friends, and they have as much to command in estate as he, if a poor woman be indebted, he is not bound to pay her debts, except he marrieth her: so Christ, except he marrieth us, cannot pay our debts, he cannot satisfie for our sins; and God will not be too free of his Son's bloud. If your sins were never so much, and you be in Christ, Christ must satisfie for thee; Christ must have lien in Hell, had he not paid our debts: so long as thou art married unto him, he must discharge thee. As now, if a woman ow'd never so much, and she is worth nothing; in that day she is married she oweth not a penny, for the Law will come upon her husband: so though we are never so much

in

in debt, and worth nothing, in the day we are married to Christ we owe nothing, for the Justice of God cannot command it of us, but must go to Christ. The Lord Christ could not do this, except he were married unto thee; therefore thou must be divorced from Lust, and be betrothed unto Christ, for he that made thee is thy Husband: if we be united unto God, the Justice of God will not come for satisfaction to us, but to Christ, who is able to satisfie. I say, (as a woman) What have you to doe with me? go to my husband. What (saith Justice) hast thou a husband? then I have nothing to say unto thee. Justice will not come any more unto you, I warrant you; for if Christ Jesus be married unto me, then he must be charged with me, and discharge all my debts for me.

Reason 3. Of Christ's love to the soul.

Because Jesus Christ our Lord cannot discover and declare the deep and dear affections to a soul, which he hath purchased of his love towards her, under any other relation, but under the relation of a Husband. Why doth a man desire to marry, but because he cannot express his love any other way? he cannot express his love so much in seeing her, or in sorrowing with her, but he must have her in bed with him, he must make over his whole estate to her, he must beget children by her: and so Christ cannot beget graces by thee, except he be married to thee. I must beget my likeness, saith Christ; I mean to be head of my Church; my wisdom, power and parts are all for my Church; I cannot make this

Hos. 2. 19, 20.

over, except I marry; therefore I'le *betroth thee to myself*, &c.

Use Of Exhortation to desire the enjoyment of Christ.

For Use; Hath Christ such an earnest desire of us? then this should teach us earnestly to desire Christ; we have more need of Christ, then he hath of us: do not think to be saved by Christ, and never to be subject unto him, never to be divorced from sin and all things for his sake: he will save Devils before he will save thee, if thou do so. Therefore let us be exhorted: what could Christ have done more then he did?

Sampson did never undergo so much for *Delilah* as Christ did for thee, therefore let us yield to this marriage, I mean of the soul. The case may stand so in the marriage of the body, as that you may marry or not marry, and yet thou mayest be saved; but not so here: for,

He that marrieth not Christ marrieth the Devil.

If you will not match with Christ, you must marry the Devil, and Sin, and you must be a hag and a baud for the Devil, if you will not be a Spouse for Christ; and if he set you to murther your selves, you must do it, if you be not married to Christ: if you will not go double to Heaven, you shall never go single: you will be bedded shortly in the Devil's bed, if you be not married to Christ. But if he be your husband, if you be married unto him, he will fetch you home ere long; however he may suffer you to tarry here a while with your friends, it shall not be long before he will send for you: therefore there is a necessity of marrying to Christ. And why should we not marry?

What

What is there in Christ, that he should be so earneſt? What are his excellencies? Quest.

What is there that is not lovely in him? what would you have in Christ that is not in him, and transcendently excellent in him? Would you have high Birth? Answ.

For high Birth, Christ is the highest born of any, he is descended from God Almighty, and he never had any other Son but this, from all eternity he was the only begotten of the Father; you cannot match to any of like birth; Kings and Princes be but born on a dunghil to Christ: therefore if you stand upon birth, consider him to be God's only Son, *Thou art my Son, &c.* as if God should say, I acknowledge thee to be my only Son by an everlasting generation; I am so far from being ashamed of him, as that I confess I have begotten him. 1. The dignity of Christ his high birth. Psalm 2.

A second thing in Christ is, as he is high-born, so he is highly educated and bred. Many Princes may be born Clowns; many a woman will say, I will not have him for a world, for he is a Clown: It is not so with Christ Jesus, for Christ was from everlasting with the Father: *The Lord possessed him in the beginning of his way*; and again, *Then was I by him, &c.* Christ was ever with God, the Lord did possess me in the beginning of his way; Christ was brought up with God, daily he was his delight, brought up in Heaven before any World was made or thought on by any creature; he wants no breeding, he hath what God hath, *I and my father are one.* 2. The dignity of Christ his high education. Prov. 8. 22, 23. John 10. 33.

3. Of Christ's dignity in his great portion.

Do you stand for portion? he hath portion enough. That is it that many a woman stands so much upon, What, hath he a portion? Is he an able man? Heaven and Earth, and Grace and Glory, all are his, and all his is yours; if you are Christ's, *all things are yours*: he hath wealth enough, so that there is no fear of want of portion.

4. The comeliness of Christ.

I, but hath he Beauty, and is he comely? Yes, he hath beauty enough; *he is all desires*, that is, altogether desireable for beauty. As many will say, he or she is ugly to my view, such a one pleaseth me not: but all the Women in the World have not so much beauty as Christ hath in him. *What is thy beloved more then another's beloved? My beloved* (saith the Spouse) *is the chiefest of ten thousands, &c.* Cant. 5. 10. Thou art beautiful, O my love (saith Christ) as *Tirzah*, comely as *Jerusalem*, and terrible as an army with banners: and, *Who is he that looketh forth, &c.* Cant. 6. 4. If Christ's Spouse be so beautiful as *Tirzah*, comely as *Jerusalem*; then Christ much more: never was *Jerusalem* or *Tirzah* so adorned as Christ is. *If she be fair as the moon, &c.* then what is he himself? What will you have more then? there is Birth, Breeding, Portion, and Beauty enough in Christ; certainly he is most lovely and desirable.

Object. Oh but, saith the poor soul, *I cannot tell whether Christ will love me or no.*

Answ. The love of *Jonathan* was never so to *David*, as Christ's will be to you; from everlasting to everlasting he is God, therefore he will ever

ever love. Christ doth love his Church most, when she is blackest and uglyest in her own eyes. Saith Christ, O thou fairest among women, thou art as beautiful in mine eyes as the fairest Saint in Heaven; I have enough to make thee beautiful. Though thou hast lien among the wicked, yet being married to Christ, he will make thee as beautiful as the wings of the Dove. Death slips our Marriage-knot, yet it doth not between Christ and the Soul; it possesseth thee of Christ's love more fully, as it is, *For I am perswaded that neither life, nor death, &c.* Adultery or the like may diminish or break the bonds here, but it doth not in Christ; (although we should not sin that grace may abound) waters cannot quench his love: what would you have more?

The love of Christ to his Spouse.

Rom. 8. 39.

Object. I do not know if I shall propagate or be fruitful by him or no, as women say.

Answ. But if you be married to Christ, you shall never be barren; as it is, *Thy teeth shall be like a flock of Sheep, &c.* and none barren among them. Those that be married unto Christ shall be so far from barrenness, as they shall bear twins.

Cant. 6. 6.

Object. Again saith the poor soul, I am a poor sinful creature, and I think his great kindred will scorn me; surely God the Father will scorn me.

Answ. Though outwardly it may be so, yet here it is otherwise. God the Father doth bestow as real love upon you (being married unto Christ) as upon Christ. Be not sorrowful, but comforted, and tell my brethren, *I ascend to my father, and to your father, &c.* If I be matched

matched to Christ, God is as much my Father as Christ's. And as for Angels and Saints, they do rejoyce at the conversion of a sinner. As for the Saints on earth, mark *David*, *All my delight is in the Saints, and in those which excel in vertue.* As for his friends and kindred, they are all reconciled to thee.

Object. I cannot tell if Christ will keep me or no:

Answ. Thou shalt not fear, if thou art matched unto Christ, he will feed thee: of the finest flowre shalt thou feed of, and of all the dainties that can be; he will carry thee into his

Isa.25.6. house, and *satisfie thee with fat things, &c.*

Object. Again, He will let me go in mean habit, it may be I shall be but meanly clad.

Answ. You shall observe that Christ doth not cloath his Spouse with base and mean attire;

Ezek 8.10, 11,12. *Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, &c.* I adorned thee with curious ornaments. Thou shalt be sure to be cloathed with grace enough, thou shalt be made one with Christ, and have means enough, and length of days here, and glory hereafter. Why should you not match with Christ? A woman may deny one, and have another as good as he: but if you refuse Christ, you shall never have such another, Heaven and Earth hath not such another; if you be not married to Christ, you are spoiled for ever.

Quest. *What must I do if I be married unto Christ? What are my duties I must do?*

Answ. If you be married to Christ, you must set your affections on him, *His banner over me was love, O stay me with flaggons, &c.*

Thou

Thou must have faith, Plight me thy troth, saith God; avouch me to be thine, as well as for me to avouch you to be mine. As if he should say, Wilt thou have my Son? thou must have him for better for worse; never think of parting if once you be married unto him. 1. Love to Christ.

Thou must be in subjection to thy husband; thou must subject thy self to Christ, his will must be thy will, you must give unto him prompt obedience in all things. 2. Subjection to Christ.

Thou must get a forsaking heart from all others. A woman forsaketh her father's house, and goeth to live with her husband: and so we must shake hands with all our sins, and bid them farewel, to go to live with Christ, and they twain shall be one spirit; *For he that is joyned unto the Lord, is one spirit.* 3. Prefer Christ above all. 1 Cor. 6. 17.

Thou must be fruitful for Christ. *Herein is my father glorified, that you bring forth much fruit.* If you have these things, Christ is your husband, you are of a truth married to him. 4. Be fruitful to Christ.

But what if I be married unto Christ, what should I have by it? is it any privilege? *Quest.*

I have told you enough already what you should have: yet farther, thou shalt have God to be thy Father; *He that hath me, hath the Father also.* God the Father will come, and make his aboad with thee. *Answ.* Our benefits by being married to Christ. 1.

If thou be matched unto Jesus Christ, thou shalt have the spirit of Jesus Christ to be thy comforter, that spirit which lieth in the bosome of God shall be with thee, the Comforter which abides with God and Christ shall abide with thee; *If I go not*, saith Christ, *the comforter* 2. The Spirit of Christ.

forter will not come: the ſpirit that comforted Chriſt on the Croſs ſhall comfort thee, and do you know what it is to have a comforter in affliction? This you ſhall have if you be matched unto Chriſt, you ſhall have the ſpirit of all conſolation and comfort.

3. The attendance of Angels.

Thou ſhalt have the Angels of God to attend thee, and to do thee any ſervice: as if they ſhould ſay, Shall we attend you this day? ſhall we keep the Devil from thee? we will bear thee in our arms, we will guard and defend thee, and do you any pleaſure. The Angels are made miniſtring ſpirits, ſet forth to miniſter for you. As when an hoſt of horſemen and chariots were ſent to *Dothan* to fetch *Eliſha* unto the King of *Syria*, his ſervant was afraid, when he ſaw the City compaſſed with chariots and horſemen, and cried out, Alas, what ſhall we do? his maſter *Eliſha* ſaid, Fear not, for they that are with us are more then they that are with them: and after *Eliſha* had prayed to the Lord to open his eyes, he beheld and ſaw the Mountains were full of chariots and horſes of fire round about *Eliſha*, he ſaw that the hoſt that was with him was, and his Maſter was greater then thoſe that were againſt him. And ſo the Angels attend continually upon the children of God, in every buſineſs they go about.

2 Kings 6. 15, 16, 17.

4. The Promiſes.

All the Promiſes of God ſhall be a pledge unto thee: the Promiſes be the ſeals of God's bonds. The will of a rich man ſealed is aſſure as if you had it in real performance.

5. Protection from the Devil.

Farther, thou ſhalt have the Devil do nothing

thing but beat thee from sin and the creature unto Christ; he shall doe thee no hurt. God lets the Devil be in the world for the good of his children. *All things shall work together for the good of God's people*, for their advantage; for thou shalt have that which *eye never saw, nor ear heard*, &c. If thou art truly united unto Jesus Christ.

Who would not think it good to match with Christ? If thou consenteſt to match with Christ, he doth so with thee; and so I pronounce Christ, and you married. As he was an earneſt Suter, now he is become a real speeder, and you are made for ever happy; happy that ever you were born, happy that ever you saw him in his Ordinances, and that ever he came to thee in the way of love, that your time was a time of love; happy that ever he took delight in thee, and that your heart is come unto him to close with him, and to be his for ever blesſed. Man or woman, thou art in a Heavenly condition already, and shalt enjoy him for ever: I say, you are happy if you have him; but miserable and wretched for ever if you want him. Poor wretch! your condition is lamentable, who ever thou art that hast not Christ, thou art in an undone condition, who can expreſs it? who can make thee to underſtand it, although he should declare it unto thee? The Lord pitty thee, and bow thy heart and ear to attend unto the things that belong to thy everlasting peace. *Amen.*

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